JOE GOLEM
OCCULT DETECTIVE
THE DROWNING CITY
by MIKE MIGNOLA
CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN
PETER BERGTING
MICHELLE MADSEN
D. PALUMBO

Having stopped a man with superhuman strength from attacking citizens under orders from the otherworldly voices in his head, Joe delves deeper into the mystery of the

OUTER DARK

and what may lurk there. He's joined by the plucky young Molly, ward of the kidnapped conjuror Felix Orlov, as well as Simon Church and the obsessive Dr. Cocteau in a collection of tales that encompass the first half of the acclaimed novel *Joe Golem: The Drowning City*.

JOE GOLEM™
OCCULT DETECTIVE

THE DROWNING CITY

JOE GOLEM™ OCCULT DETECTIVE

THE DROWNING CITY

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JOE GOLEM: OCCULT DETECTIVE VOLUME 3—THE DROWNING CITY

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THE DROWNING CITY

Part

1

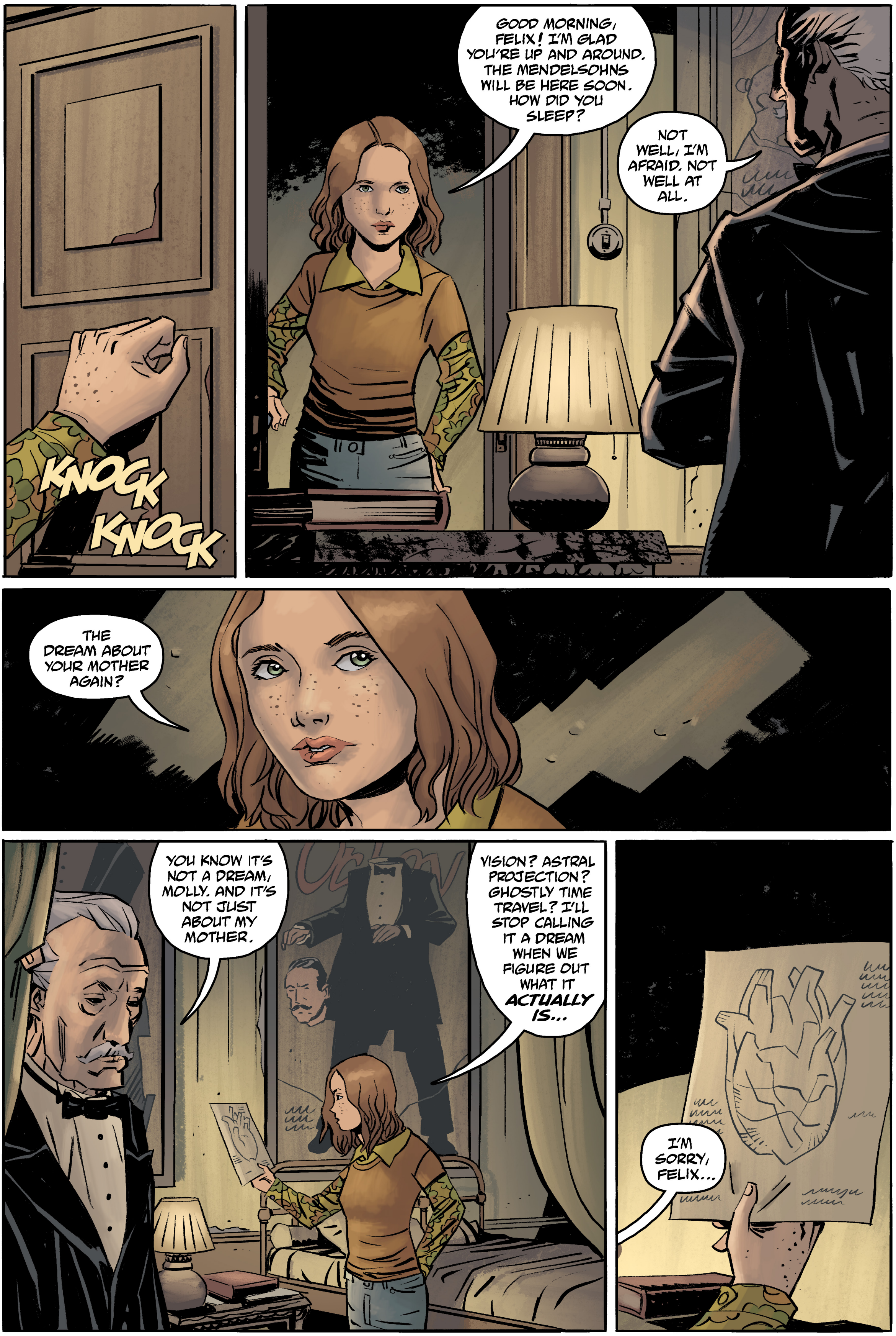
DEATH IS THE KEY.
I SPEAK NOW TO THE POWERS WHO WAIT BEYOND THE CURTAIN OF THIS WORLD. TO THEM I WILL SURRENDER THIS LIFE. THESE LIVES...
...AND WITH THE PENTAJULUM, I WILL CHANNEL THAT LIFE INTO MY OWN SWEET WIFE, AND RECLAIM HER SPIRIT FROM THE DARKNESS!
FELIX ORLOV DREAMS HE IS A GHOST.
IN THE DREAM THAT IS NOT A DREAM, HE KNOWS THE NAME OF THIS OCCULTIST--ANDREW GOLNIK.

HE KNOWS THE NAME OF THIS ARTIFACT--LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM.
HE KNOWS THE NAME OF THIS WOMAN, GOLNIK'S INTENDED SACRIFICE--CYNTHIA.
CYNTHIA ORLOV. ORLOV'S MOTHER.
LIKE SO MANY OTHERS BEFORE HIM, GOLNIK KNEW THE STORIES ABOUT LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM, ABOUT THE OCCULT POWER, AND BELIEVED HE COULD HARNESS AND DIRECT THAT POWER FOR HIMSELF.
LIKE SO MANY OTHERS BEFORE HIM...

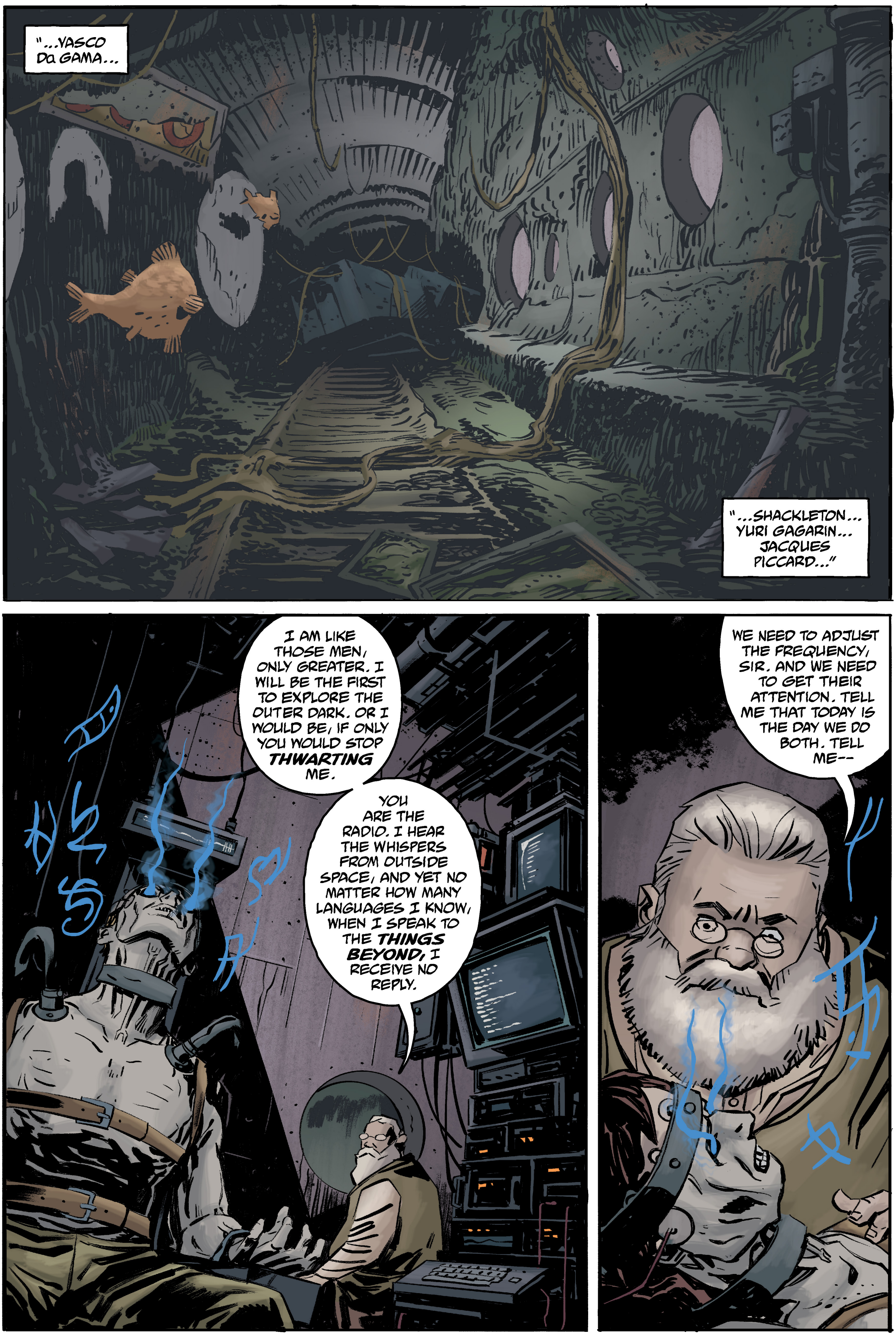
...GOLNIK WAS A FOOL.
WAIT... WHAT'VE YOU DONE? IT'S NOT WORKING.
ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU PAINTED THE SIGILS CORRECTLY?
AIIIEEE!
FELIX ORLOV DREAMS HE IS A GHOST...

...AND HE WAKES, KNOWING IT IS MORE THAN A DREAM.
UNGGHH
ORLOV
ALL RIGHT, OLD BOY. YOU CAN MANAGE. MAYBE CARD TRICKS ARE BEYOND YOU, BUT YOU CAN STILL KNOT A TIE.

NEW YORK.
THE DROWNING CITY.
SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1975.


KNOCK KNOCK
GOOD MORNING, FELIX! I'M GLAD YOU'RE UP AND AROUND. THE MENDELSOHNS WILL BE HERE SOON. HOW DID YOU SLEEP?
NOT WELL, I'M AFRAID. NOT WELL AT ALL.
THE DREAM ABOUT YOUR MOTHER AGAIN?
YOU KNOW IT'S NOT A DREAM, MOLLY. AND IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT MY MOTHER.
VISION? ASTRAL PROJECTION? GHOSTLY TIME TRAVEL? I'LL STOP CALLING IT A DREAM WHEN WE FIGURE OUT WHAT IT ***ACTUALLY*** IS...
I'M SORRY, FELIX...

"...I JUST WISH WE KNEW WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT."
"MAGELLAN...

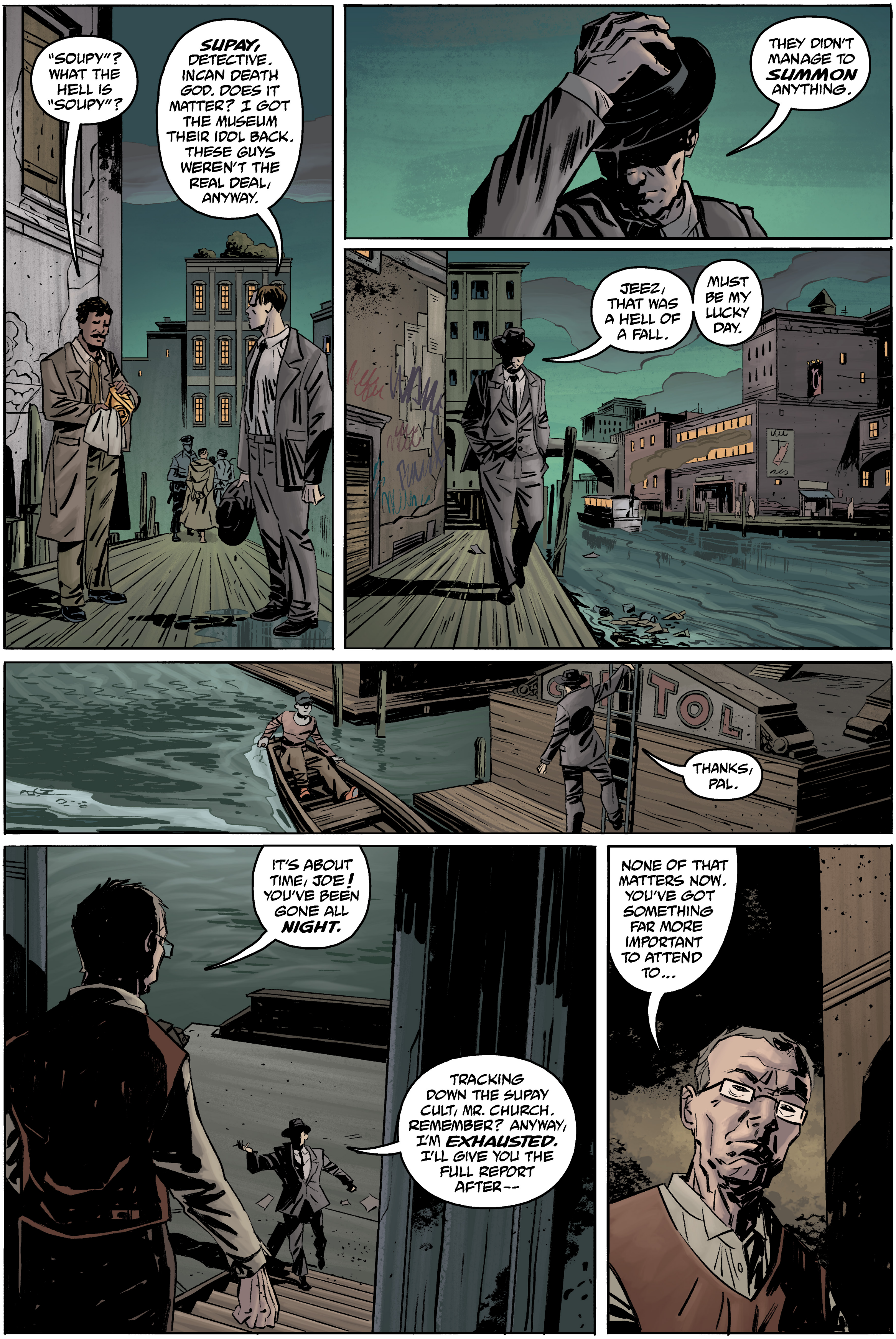

"...VASCO Da GAMA...
"...SHACKLETON... YURI GAGARIN... JACQUES PICCARD..."
I AM LIKE THOSE MEN, ONLY GREATER. I WILL BE THE FIRST TO EXPLORE THE OUTER DARK. OR I WOULD BE, IF ONLY YOU WOULD STOP THWARTING ME.
YOU ARE THE RADIO. I HEAR THE WHISPERS FROM OUTSIDE SPACE, AND YET NO MATTER HOW MANY LANGUAGES I KNOW, WHEN I SPEAK TO THE THINGS BEYOND, I RECEIVE NO REPLY.
WE NEED TO ADJUST THE FREQUENCY, SIR. AND WE NEED TO GET THEIR ATTENTION. TELL ME THAT TODAY IS THE DAY WE DO BOTH. TELL ME--

WHAT'S THAT?
OH. WELL, THEN...
IT SEEMS TODAY *IS* THE DAY. THE SITUATION HAS... RIPENED.
I HAVE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AND EFFORT PREPARING YOU ALL FOR THIS.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.
GO GET HIM.
DO **NOT** DISAPPOINT ME.

LOWER MANHATTAN'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT.
KRAK
UNGGHH!
URRKK... OH YOU SON OF A...
THAK
THAT'S IT!

THIS IS WHAT I GET!
I TRIED BEING POLITE. TOLD YOU GUYS IF YOU TURNED OVER THE IDOL, I'D RETURN IT TO THE MUSEUM, NO QUESTIONS ASKED...
THUD
...BUT NO...
...WE JUST HAD TO DO IT THE HARD WAY...
SERVES ME RIGHT.
KRASSHH

KRASSHH
CRAP.

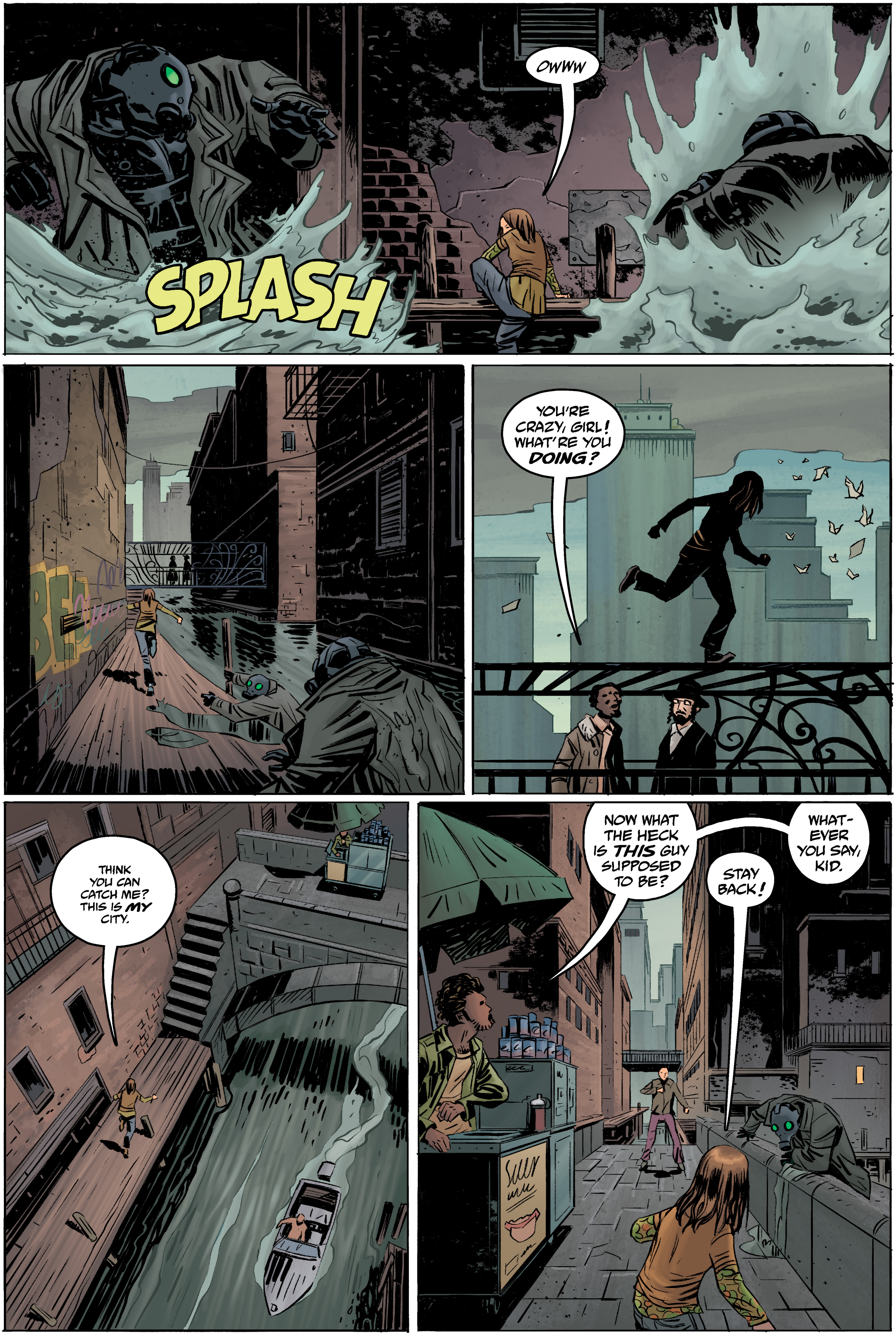

"SOUPY"? WHAT THE HELL IS "SOUPY"?
SUPAY, DETECTIVE. INCAN DEATH GOD. DOES IT MATTER? I GOT THE MUSEUM THEIR IDOL BACK. THESE GUYS WEREN'T THE REAL DEAL, ANYWAY.
THEY DIDN'T MANAGE TO SUMMON ANYTHING.
JEEZ, THAT WAS A HELL OF A FALL.
MUST BE MY LUCKY DAY.
THANKS, PAL.
IT'S ABOUT TIME, JOE! YOU'VE BEEN GONE ALL NIGHT.
TRACKING DOWN THE SUPAY CULT, MR. CHURCH. REMEMBER? ANYWAY, I'M EXHAUSTED. I'LL GIVE YOU THE FULL REPORT AFTER--
NONE OF THAT MATTERS NOW. YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO ATTEND TO...

"...IT'S ORLOV. SOMETHING'S **HAPPENING**."
GGHUKKK
WHAT THE HELL--
WHAT IS IT, MR. ORLOV? IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH OUR DAVID? YOU CAN'T REACH HIM?
YES, SOME-THING'S WRONG WITH DAVID. HE'S **DEAD.** THIS WHOLE THING IS--
FELIX?
HHIIGGGKK
WHAT AN OLD FRAUD.
NO. SOMETHING'S BEEN OFF ALL MORNING. HE'S... I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THIS.
HHURRFF... GGGHHH

T'OXL URTHA YTHO N'GAOH
FELIX, PLEASE, WAKE UP! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO HELP YOU. PLEASE--
DO SOMETHING! HE'S HAVING SOME KIND OF SEIZURE!
YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A FOOL, SARAH. DON'T LET THIS CHARLATAN CONTINUE TO--
NGAH YTHO N'GAOH
WHAT? I'M... I'M SORRY, FELIX. I DON'T UNDER-STAND!
KRISSHH
WHAT IN THE NAME OF GOD?
KRASSHH
HSSSSSSSSSSS

OH MY...
SLAM
HSSSSS
AIIIE!
SNAP
HHURRKK
WHUDDD
RRRRUNNNN
FELIX?

NO, NO, NO.
I'M SORRY, FELIX.
I'M SORRY.



OWWW
SPLASH
YOU'RE CRAZY, GIRL! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
THINK YOU CAN CATCH ME? THIS IS MY CITY.
NOW WHAT THE HECK IS THIS GUY SUPPOSED TO BE?
WHAT-EVER YOU SAY, KID.
STAY BACK!

...I CAN'T... JEEZ, MY HEAD...
SORRY, PAL.
HEY!
THUD
JACKASS. TOLD YOU THIS WAS MY--
UHNFFF!

WHO THE HELL--
RELAX, KID. I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
SHAME ON YOU WEIRDOS. PICKING ON A KID. I OUGHTA--
WHOOSH
WELL...
WHOOOSHHH
THAT'S NEW.
C'MON, KID.
I'VE GOTTA TAKE YOU TO CHURCH.

AT LAST...
ORLOV THE CONJUROR.
I'VE HAD MY EYE ON YOU FOR A LONG TIME. AND I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE TIME TO ARRIVE. YOUR MOMENT OF... **MATURITY,** SHALL WE SAY? AND NOW THAT MOMENT IS ALMOST HERE.
BUT BEFORE IT COMES, THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE I NEED FROM YOU.
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BUILD MY OWN FOR YEARS, BUT I HAVEN'T HAD ANY LUCK.
NOW THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO TELL ME, FELIX. WHERE IS LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM?

I...DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE... TALKING ABOUT.
COME NOW. THERE SHALL BE NO LIES BETWEEN US. GIVE ME WHAT I ASK FOR AND I WILL DELIVER YOU FROM THIS STRIFE. THE VOICES TELL ME IT IS TIME.
VOICES? WHAT...WHAT VOICES?
I KNOW YOU HEAR THEM. I KNOW YOU UNDER-STAND.
I DO. GOD HELP ME...I DO.
IT'S YOU THEY'RE CALLING FOR, FELIX. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOU. AND AS SOON AS YOU TELL ME WHERE TO FIND THE PENTAJULUM...
...AT LONG LAST...WE'RE GOING TO ANSWER!

THE DROWNING CITY

Part 2

A RAINY AFTERNOON IN THE DROWNING CITY. THE STREETS HAVE BEEN UNDERWATER FOR HALF A CENTURY. A LITTLE RAIN DOESN'T SCARE ANYONE.
UPTOWN IS FULL OF GLEAMING SPIRES AND PEOPLE WHO STAY OUT OF THE RAIN. BUT DOWN HERE... THIS IS THE REAL NEW YORK.
IT'S A PLACE FULL OF HEARTACHE AND LAUGHTER, OF HISTORY AND MYSTERY.
IT'S A CITY OF SURVIVORS.
UNNGGHH
WHAT THE F--

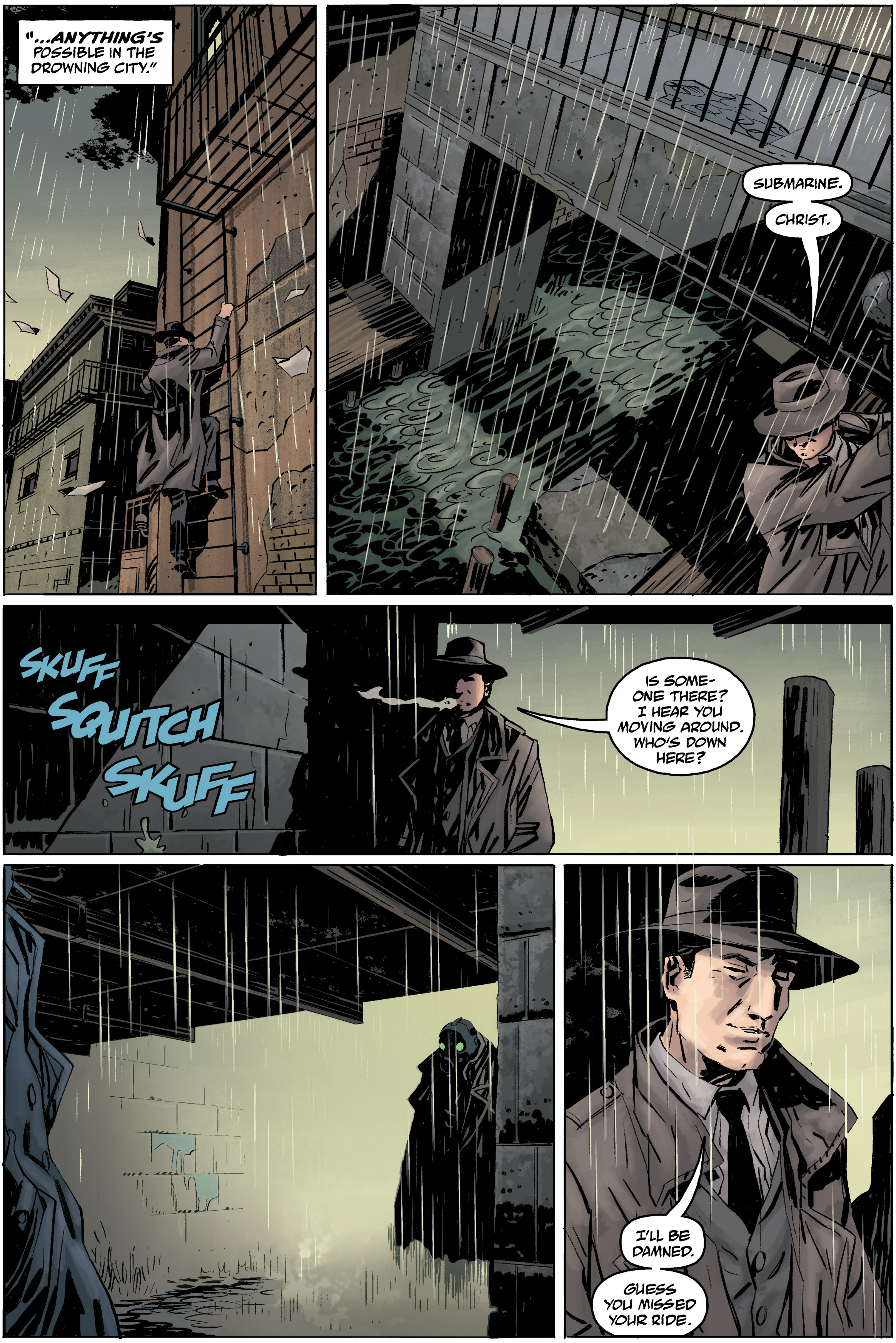
CCREEEEAK
...HELLO...?
♩♪♫

KRREEEEKK
MONSTROSITY.
WHOEVER DID THIS...

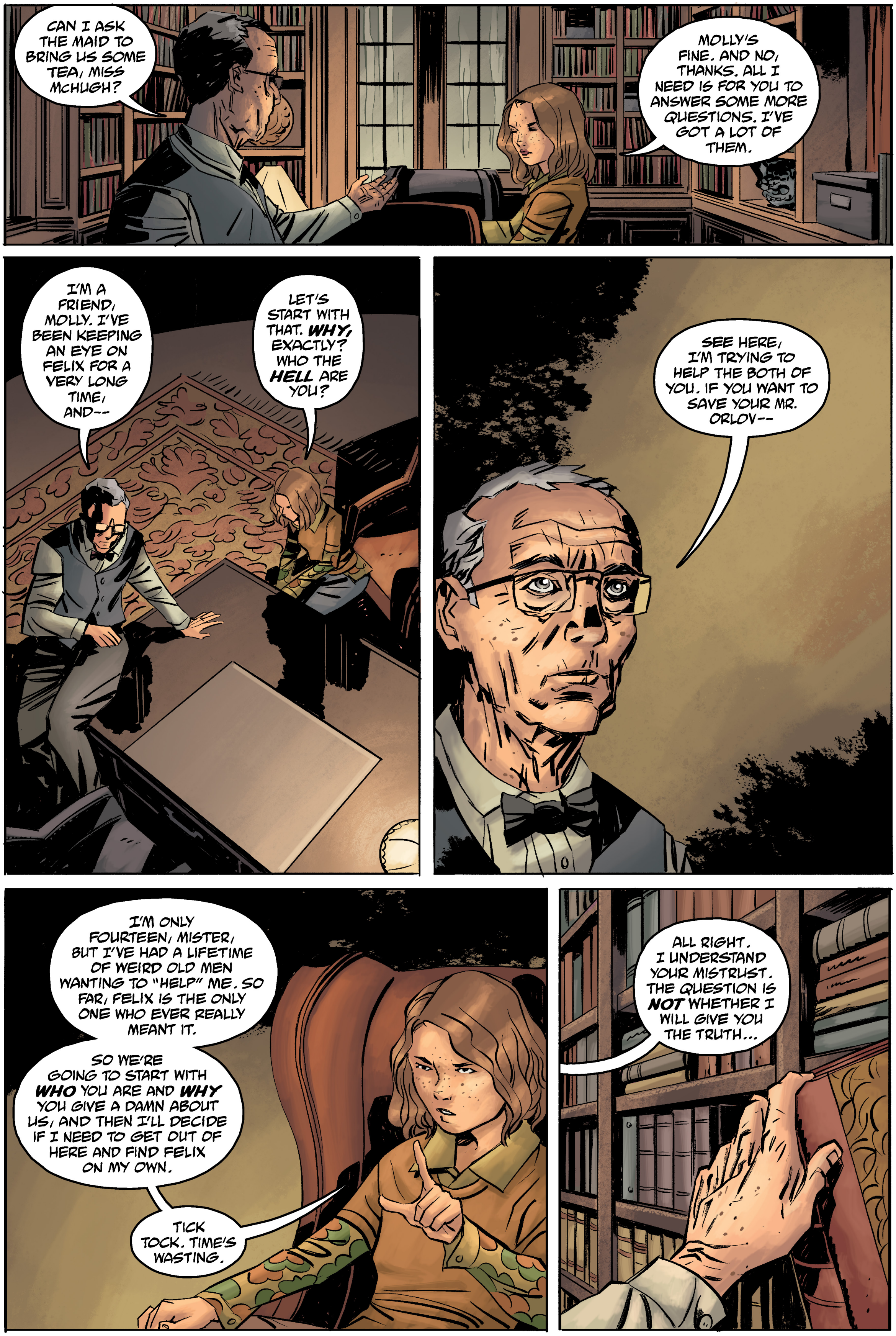
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, MISTER, BUT I'VE GOT SOME QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS.
I'M CERTAIN YOU DO. ASK AWAY, YOUNG LADY, AND I SHALL DO MY BEST TO SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY.
FIRST, WHO THE HELL ARE YOU, AND WHERE AM I? SECOND, WHERE'S THE GUY WHO BROUGHT ME HERE? THIRD... WHAT THE HELL IS *THAT?*
THIS, ON THE TABLE, IS THE ARM OF ONE OF THE CREATURES THAT ATTACKED YOU. THE "GAS-MEN," AS MY FRIEND JOE DESCRIBED THEM TO ME.
AS TO JOE'S WHEREABOUTS...WELL, MY DEAR...

"...AT THE MOMENT, HE'S OUT TRYING TO FIND AN ANSWER TO QUESTION NUMBER THREE."
Queen st MARKET
GAS MASKS? YOU'RE ASKIN' ME IF I SEEN GUYS WEARIN' GAS MASKS? THIS SOME KINDA SPY STUFF, OR TRICK 'R TREAT?
I'M GONNA GO OUT ON A LIMB...
Queen st. fish MARKET
...AND ASSUME THAT'S A NO.
SURE, I SAW 'EM. HOW COULD I MISS 'EM, CHASING THAT REDHEADED GIRL?
WHAT ABOUT AFTER? DID YOU SEE WHERE THEY WENT?
SURE DID. BUT I'M TELLING YOU, PAL, YOU'RE GONNA THINK I'M NUTS.
TRY ME.

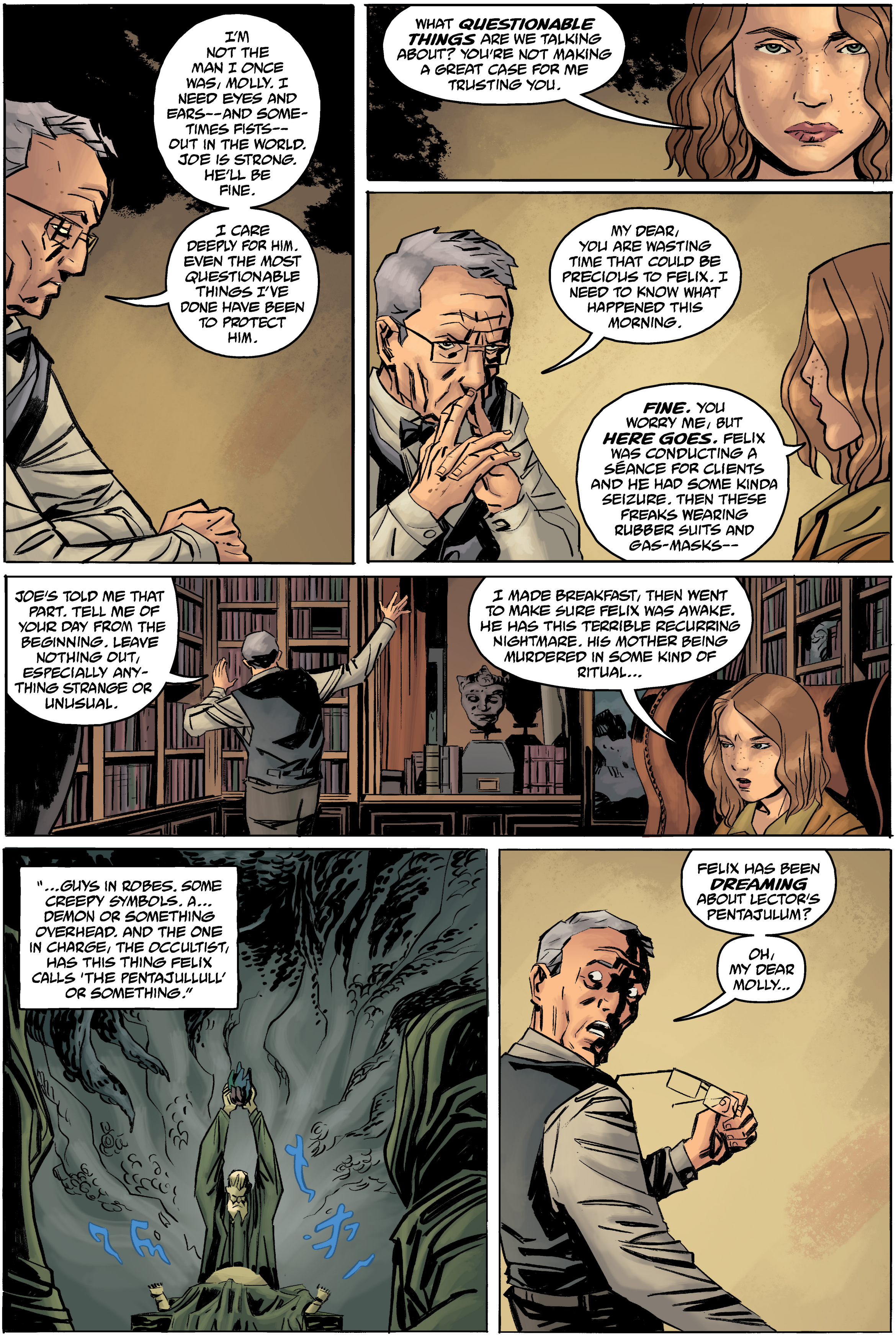
YOU WANNA KNOW THE TRUTH? THEY CLIMBED INTO A LITTLE SUBMARINE-TYPE THING AND DISAPPEARED IN THE WATER UNDER THAT BRIDGE.
A SUBMARINE.
YOU SAY THAT LIKE I CALLED IT A FLYING SAUCER. YOU DON'T WANNA BELIEVE ME, THAT'S UP TO YOU.
BUT LEMME TELL YA, I BEEN LIVING DOWN HERE MY WHOLE LIFE...


"...ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE IN THE DROWNING CITY."
SUBMARINE.
CHRIST.
SKUFF
SQUITCH
SKUFF
IS SOME-ONE THERE? I HEAR YOU MOVING AROUND. WHO'S DOWN HERE?
I'LL BE DAMNED.
GUESS YOU MISSED YOUR RIDE.

SON OF A BITCH!
SSPLLSHHH
BLAM
SPLASH


CAN I ASK THE MAID TO BRING US SOME TEA, MISS MCHUGH?
MOLLY'S FINE. AND NO, THANKS. ALL I NEED IS FOR YOU TO ANSWER SOME MORE QUESTIONS. I'VE GOT A LOT OF THEM.
I'M A FRIEND, MOLLY. I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON FELIX FOR A VERY LONG TIME, AND--
LET'S START WITH THAT. WHY, EXACTLY? WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
SEE HERE, I'M TRYING TO HELP THE BOTH OF YOU. IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR MR. ORLOV--
I'M ONLY FOURTEEN, MISTER, BUT I'VE HAD A LIFETIME OF WEIRD OLD MEN WANTING TO "HELP" ME. SO FAR, FELIX IS THE ONLY ONE WHO EVER REALLY MEANT IT.
SO WE'RE GOING TO START WITH WHO YOU ARE AND WHY YOU GIVE A DAMN ABOUT US, AND THEN I'LL DECIDE IF I NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE AND FIND FELIX ON MY OWN.
TICK TOCK. TIME'S WASTING.
ALL RIGHT. I UNDERSTAND YOUR MISTRUST. THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER I WILL GIVE YOU THE TRUTH...

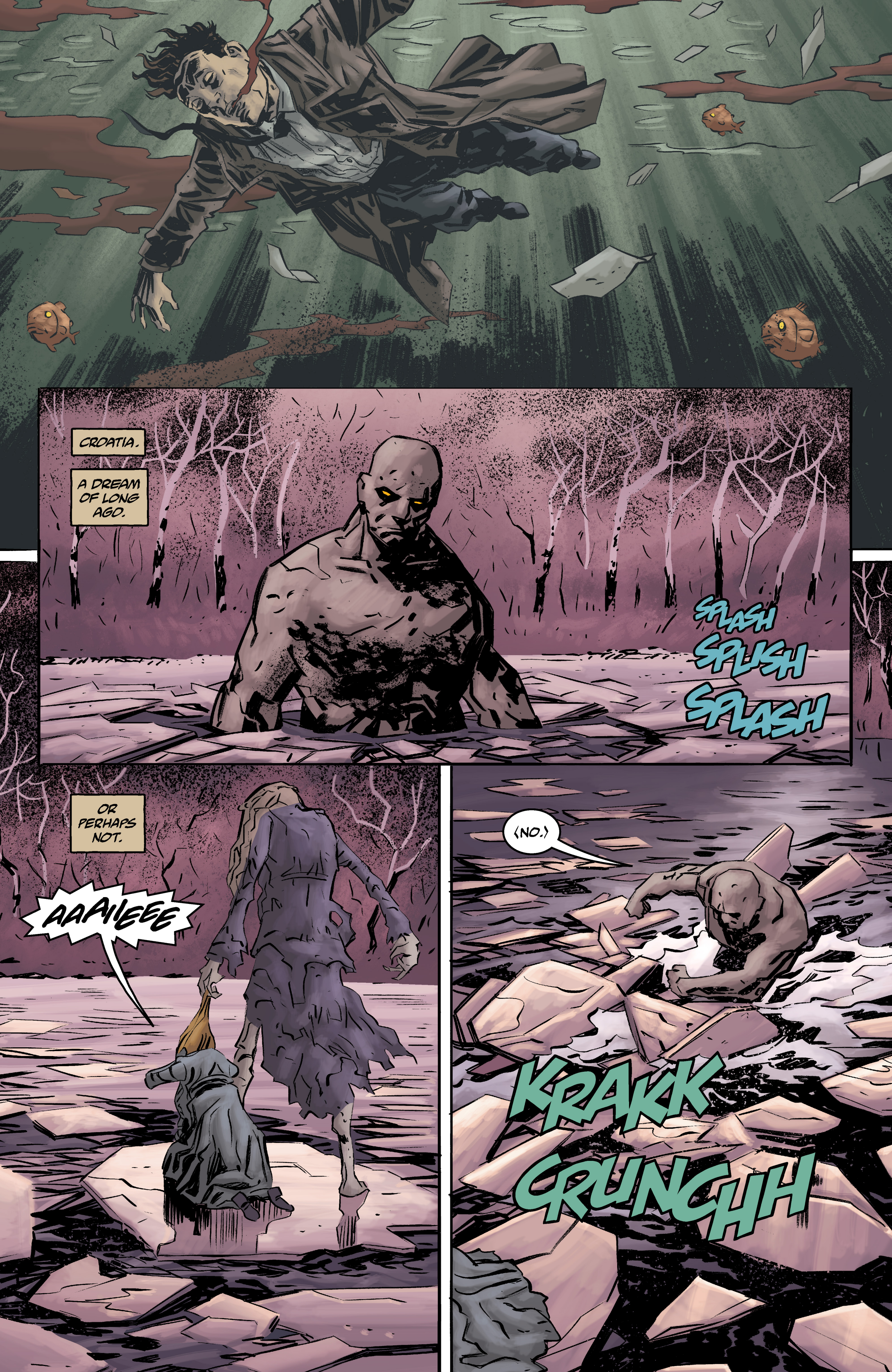
...BUT WHETHER YOU'LL BELIEVE IT.
SAVE YOUR OMINOUS, MYSTERIOUS CRAP FOR SOMEONE WHO HASN'T LIVED WITH A SPIRITUAL MEDIUM. JUST TELL ME WHAT THIS BOOK IS SUPPOSED TO PROVE.
BEETON'S CHRISTMAS ANNUAL
THE ONE-HORSE CAROUSEL
A TALE OF THE DETECTIVE SIMON CHURCH
THE STORY IN BEETON'S CHRISTMAS ANNUAL WAS THE FIRST, BUT DR. HAWTHORNE--NIGEL--WROTE DOZENS OF THEM. WHEN THEY BEGAN APPEARING IN THE STRAND, MY POPULARITY SOARED.
THIS IS STUPID. SIMON CHURCH IS A CHARACTER FROM DETECTIVE STORIES. THE DATE ON THIS FIRST ONE IS DECEMBER, 1896...
YOU'RE OLD, MISTER, BUT YOU'RE NOT THAT OLD.
THUMP
BUT I AM, MY DEAR. I'VE LEARNED MANY ODD THINGS IN ALL THOSE YEARS, AND THEY'VE HELPED KEEP ME...WELL, IF NOT "YOUNG," THEN AT LEAST ALIVE.
NIGEL HAWTHORNE WROTE DOWN THOSE ADVENTURES BEFORE HE DIED. HE WAS ONLY THE FIRST OF MANY ASSISTANTS I'VE HAD... FRIENDS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES AIDING ME.
SO YOUR SIDEKICKS KEPT DYING, AND YOU JUST KEPT RECRUITING MORE? DID YOU NEVER THINK MAYBE IT WAS WORKING FOR YOU THAT GOT THEM KILLED?
IF IT'S JOE YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, YOU NEEDN'T BE. HE'S NOT AS EASILY KILLED AS THE ASSISTANTS I'VE HAD BEFORE.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN? PEOPLE DIE, MISTER CHURCH. YOU GROW UP IN THE DROWNING CITY, YOU SEE PLENTY OF EVIDENCE.


I'M NOT THE MAN I ONCE WAS, MOLLY. I NEED EYES AND EARS--AND SOME-TIMES FISTS--OUT IN THE WORLD. JOE IS STRONG. HE'LL BE FINE.
I CARE DEEPLY FOR HIM. EVEN THE MOST QUESTIONABLE THINGS I'VE DONE HAVE BEEN TO PROTECT HIM.
WHAT QUESTIONABLE THINGS ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE NOT MAKING A GREAT CASE FOR ME TRUSTING YOU.
MY DEAR, YOU ARE WASTING TIME THAT COULD BE PRECIOUS TO FELIX. I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED THIS MORNING.
FINE. YOU WORRY ME, BUT HERE GOES. FELIX WAS CONDUCTING A SÉANCE FOR CLIENTS AND HE HAD SOME KINDA SEIZURE. THEN THESE FREAKS WEARING RUBBER SUITS AND GAS-MASKS--
JOE'S TOLD ME THAT PART. TELL ME OF YOUR DAY FROM THE BEGINNING. LEAVE NOTHING OUT, ESPECIALLY ANY-THING STRANGE OR UNUSUAL.
I MADE BREAKFAST, THEN WENT TO MAKE SURE FELIX WAS AWAKE. HE HAS THIS TERRIBLE RECURRING NIGHTMARE. HIS MOTHER BEING MURDERED IN SOME KIND OF RITUAL...
"...GUYS IN ROBES. SOME CREEPY SYMBOLS. A... DEMON OR SOMETHING OVERHEAD. AND THE ONE IN CHARGE, THE OCCULTIST, HAS THIS THING FELIX CALLS 'THE PENTAJULLULL' OR SOMETHING."
FELIX HAS BEEN DREAMING ABOUT LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM?
OH, MY DEAR MOLLY...

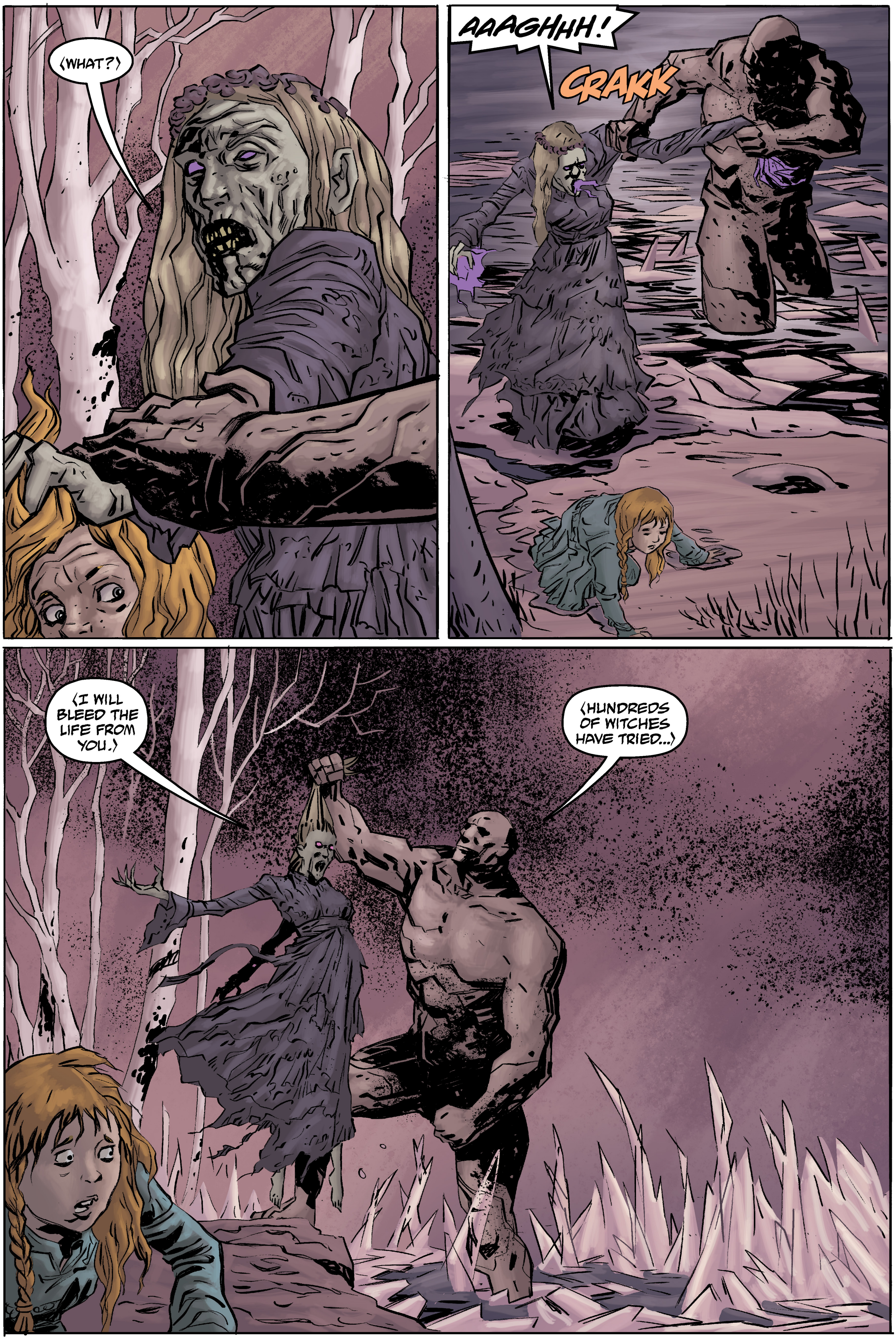
"...THAT IS TROUBLING NEWS INDEED."
SPLUNKX

SSHLLUKK
GYAAHHH!
ONE OF THESE DAYS...I'M GONNA LEARN... TO PAY MORE ATTENTION...

...TO MY SURROUNDINGS.
OH, COME ON!
KRAK
HEY!
COME BACK HERE, ASS-HOLE!
WHAT THE HELL YOU THINK YOU'RE DOIN' DOWN THERE?

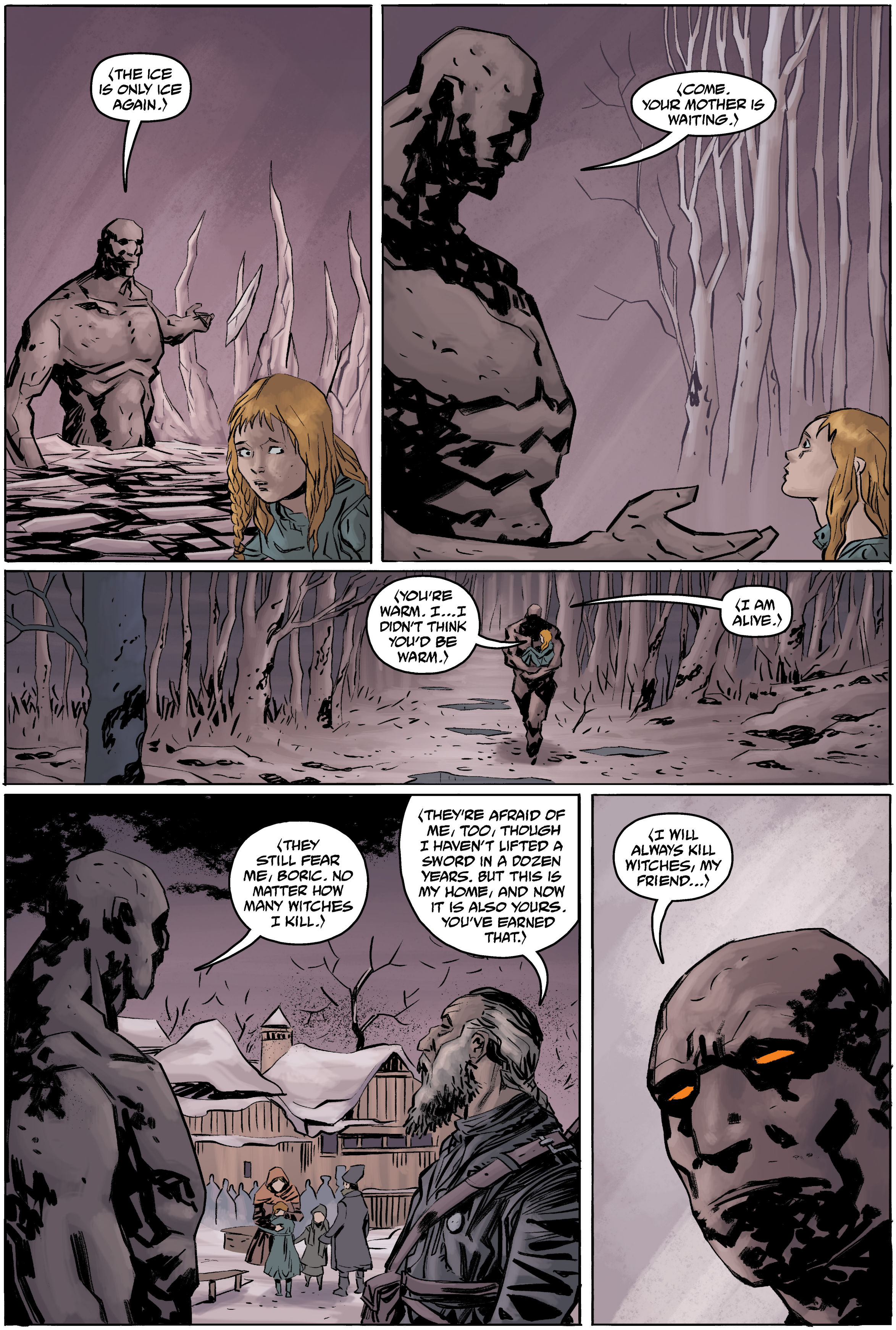


CROATIA.
A DREAM OF LONG AGO.
SPLASH
SPLUSH
SPLASH
OR PERHAPS NOT.
AAAIEEE
‹NO.›
KRAKK
CRUNCHH



⟨TRANSLATED FROM 15TH CENTURY SLAVONIAN⟩

〈...AND DIED.〉
SPLASSHHH
KRAK
SNAPP


⟨THE ICE IS ONLY ICE AGAIN.⟩
⟨COME. YOUR MOTHER IS WAITING.⟩
⟨YOU'RE WARM. I...I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D BE WARM.⟩
⟨I AM ALIVE.⟩
⟨THEY STILL FEAR ME, BORIC. NO MATTER HOW MANY WITCHES I KILL.⟩
⟨THEY'RE AFRAID OF ME, TOO, THOUGH I HAVEN'T LIFTED A SWORD IN A DOZEN YEARS. BUT THIS IS MY HOME, AND NOW IT IS ALSO YOURS. YOU'VE EARNED THAT.⟩
⟨I WILL ALWAYS KILL WITCHES, MY FRIEND...⟩

"...BUT I HAVE NO HOME."
THIS PLACE, MOLLY...THIS IS THE ONLY HOME JOE HAS EVER KNOWN.
HE REALLY DOESN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT HIS PAST?
THE OCCASIONAL FLASH, HERE AND THERE, BUT NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE.
AND YOU...A GUY WHO USED TO LET PEOPLE CALL HIM THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE...
...JOE'S BEEN YOUR SIDEKICK ALL THESE YEARS, AND YOU'VE **NEVER** BEEN ABLE TO UNCOVER HIS HISTORY?
I DO ALL I CAN TO HELP HIM. I HAVE LOST TOO MANY FRIENDS OVER THE COURSE OF MY CAREER.
ONE OF THEM, IN FACT, DIED THE DAY THAT YOUR FRIEND FELIX WAS BORN.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? HOW DO YOU KNOW FELIX'S BIRTHDAY? YOU SAID YOU'D BEEN WATCHING US--
HIS NAME WAS MORRIS SOWERBERRY...AND THIS IS THE BLADE THAT KILLED HIM...

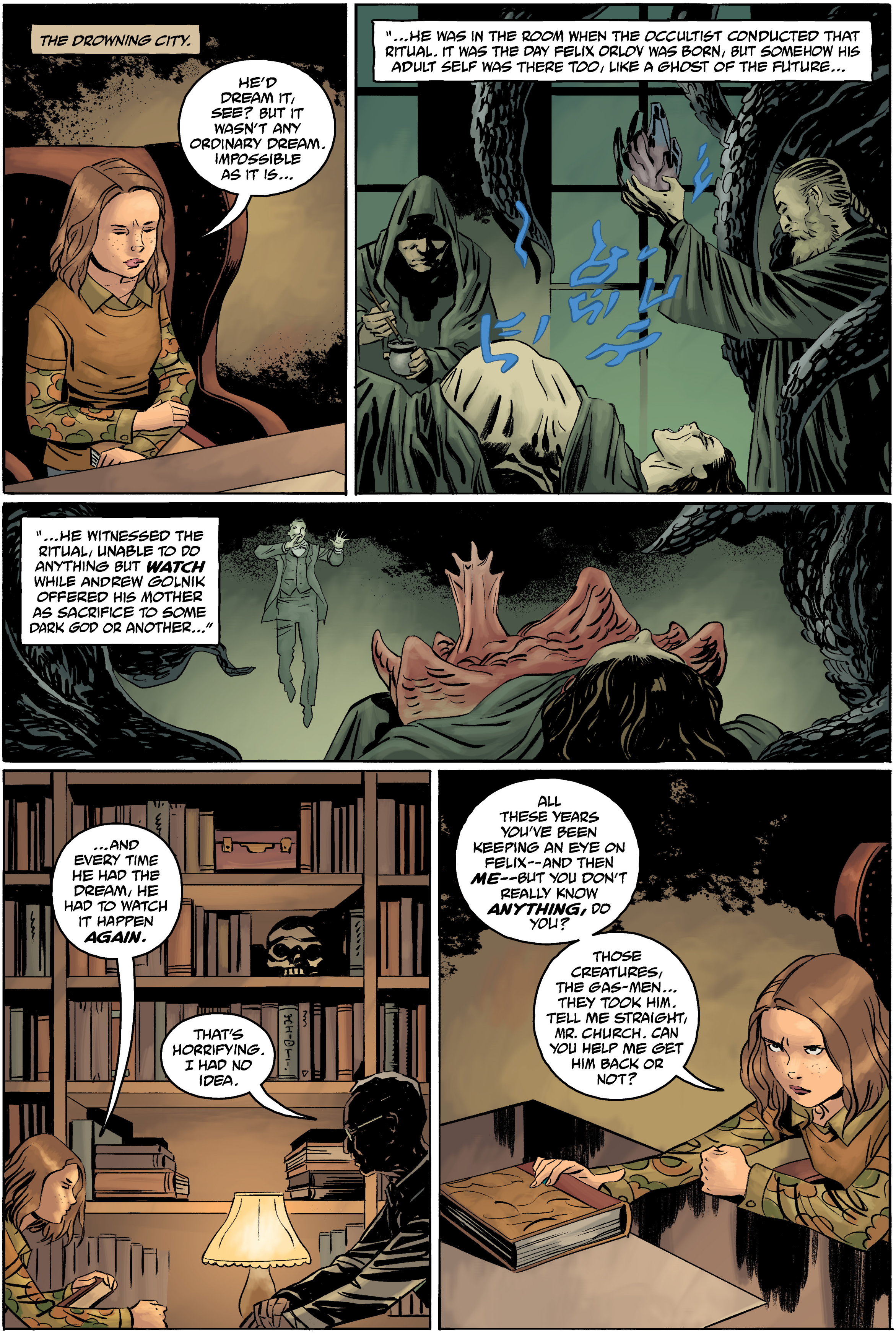
"...WE WERE *THERE,* YOU SEE...THE NIGHT ANDREW GOLNIK TRIED TO USE LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM AND A PREGNANT CYNTHIA ORLOV TO UNLOCK THE DOOR TO THE OUTER DARK."
KRASHH
"I FELT SOMETHING IN THE ROOM THAT NIGHT, UNLIKE ANY-THING I'D EVER FELT BEFORE...
"...A PRESENCE SO MALIGN AND SO ENORMOUS THAT THE MERE THOUGHT OF IT CREATES A FRISSON OF FEAR WITHIN ME, EVEN TO THIS DAY...
"WHEN IT WAS OVER, SOWERBERRY WAS DEAD. GOLNIK AND MOST OF HIS CIRCLE WERE DEAD. CYNTHIA ORLOV HAD GONE MAD. HER MIND NEVER RECOVERED...
"...THE PENTAJULUM, THE CRUX OF IT ALL, HAD VANISHED AS IF IT HAD NEVER BEEN THERE AT ALL, AND SO HAD THE MALIGNANT PRESENCE IN THAT ROOM..."
...FELIX CAME INTO THE WORLD--IN THAT ROOM--BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVED. I'VE TAKEN A SPECIAL INTEREST IN HIM EVER SINCE.
I *KNOW* THERE'S MORE YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME, BUT RIGHT NOW FELIX IS ALL I CARE ABOUT. DO YOU THINK JOE WILL FIND HIM?

"IF ANYONE CAN, JOE WILL. I'VE TAUGHT HIM EVERYTHING I KNEW ABOUT BEING A DETECTIVE. AND THE TRUTH IS, HE'S ALWAYS KNOWN HOW TO TRACK THE EVIL IN THIS CITY...
"...HE WAS **BORN** FOR IT."
HHURRKK
GOTTA SAY...
KOFF KOFF KOFF
맛깔네집
맛깔네집
...I WASN'T SURE YOU'D MAKE IT.
TAXI

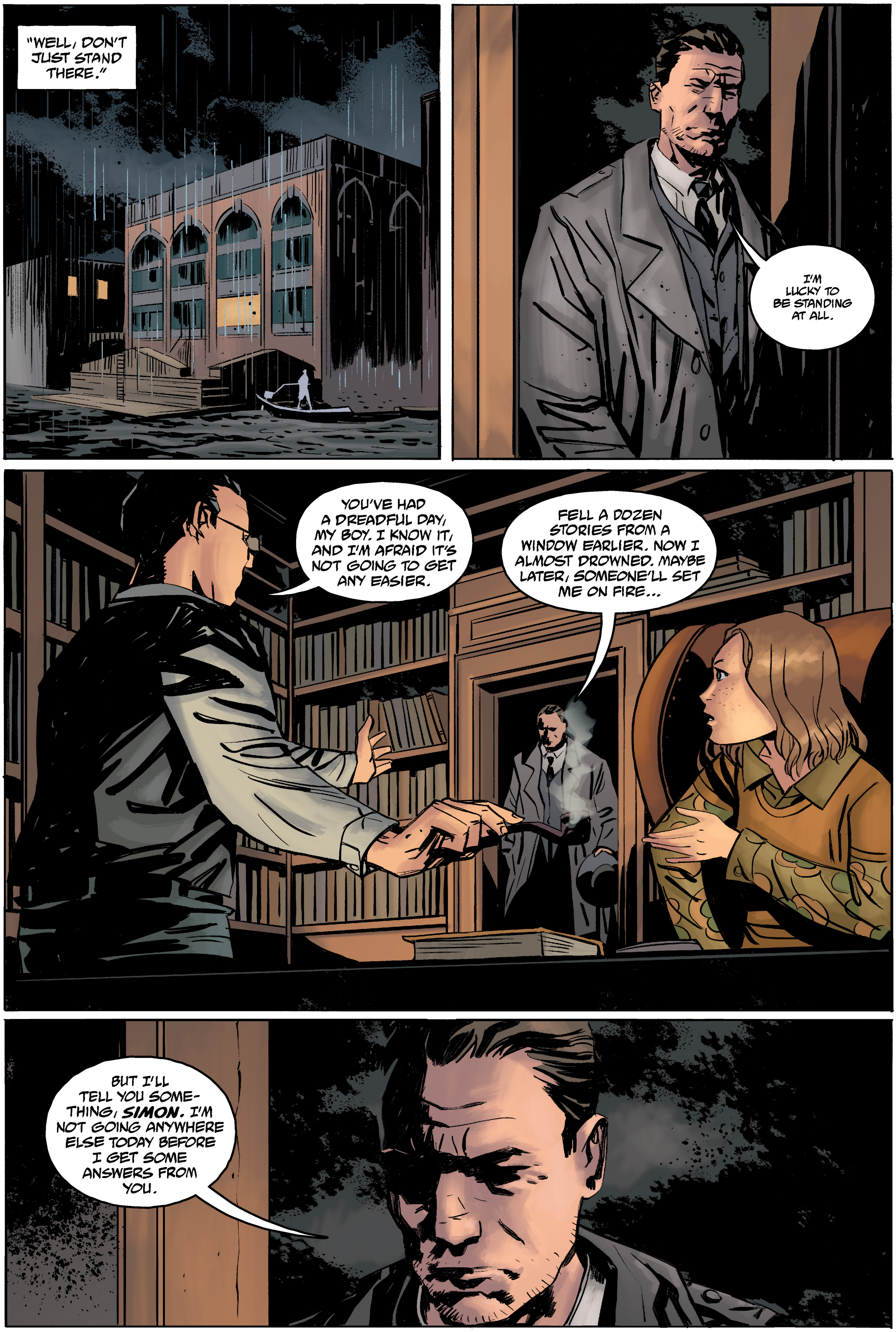
YOU NEARLY DIED.
I'VE NEARLY DIED A WHOLE LOT OF TIMES...
...BUT I'M GRATEFUL, MISTER. MORE THAN YOU KNOW. SO I HATE TO ASK FOR ONE OTHER FAVOR...
ONE STEP AHEAD OF YOU, SON. HAPPY TO RUN YOU HOME IF YOU'LL TELL ME WHERE IT IS.
RRRRMMMMM
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S HOME. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S REAL ANYMORE. I'VE GOT A HELL OF A LOT OF QUESTIONS.
BUT I THINK I KNOW WHO HAS THE ANSWERS.

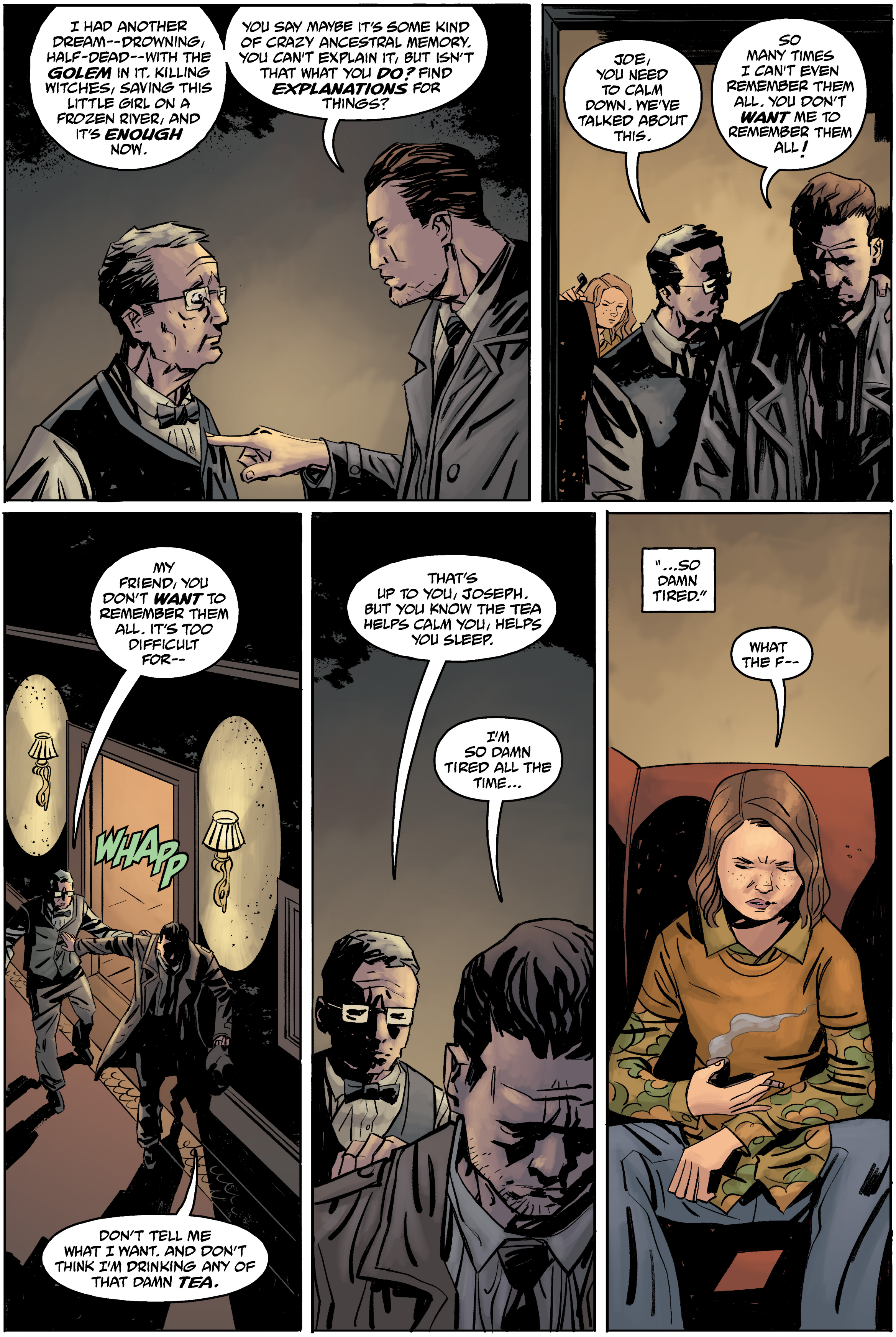
THE DROWNING CITY

Part 3


THE DROWNING CITY.
HE'D DREAM IT, SEE? BUT IT WASN'T ANY ORDINARY DREAM. IMPOSSIBLE AS IT IS...
"...HE WAS IN THE ROOM WHEN THE OCCULTIST CONDUCTED THAT RITUAL. IT WAS THE DAY FELIX ORLOV WAS BORN, BUT SOMEHOW HIS ADULT SELF WAS THERE TOO, LIKE A GHOST OF THE FUTURE...
"...HE WITNESSED THE RITUAL, UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING BUT WATCH WHILE ANDREW GOLNIK OFFERED HIS MOTHER AS SACRIFICE TO SOME DARK GOD OR ANOTHER..."
...AND EVERY TIME HE HAD THE DREAM, HE HAD TO WATCH IT HAPPEN AGAIN.
THAT'S HORRIFYING. I HAD NO IDEA.
ALL THESE YEARS YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON FELIX--AND THEN ME--BUT YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?
THOSE CREATURES, THE GAS-MEN... THEY TOOK HIM. TELL ME STRAIGHT, MR. CHURCH. CAN YOU HELP ME GET HIM BACK OR NOT?

YOU HAVE MY WORD, MOLLY. I CAN HELP FELIX, AND I **WILL.**
BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND...THE PENTAJULUM IS THE **TRUE** DANGER, BOTH TO FELIX AND THIS CITY. COCTEAU WANTS THE DEVICE. HE THINKS FELIX KNOWS WHERE IT IS.
IF WE CAN ACQUIRE IT OURSELVES, WE'LL DISRUPT WHATEVER THE LUNATIC HAS PLANNED FOR FELIX. DR. COCTEAU WILL BE FORCED TO COME TO US. YOU MUST THINK--
--FELIX DOESN'T HAVE IT. I KNOW EVERY INCH OF THE APARTMENT AND IT'S DEFINITELY NOT THERE. I GUESS HE MIGHT HAVE AN IDEA WHERE IT IS, BUT HE'S SO FRAIL THAT HE HARDLY EVER LEAVES THE HOUSE...
THE ONLY PLACE HE EVER GOES IS BROOKLYN HEIGHTS. ONCE A MONTH HE TAKES FLOWERS TO HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE AND...
MR. CHURCH?
HUSH A MOMENT, GIRL...
WE HAVE AN AUDIENCE.

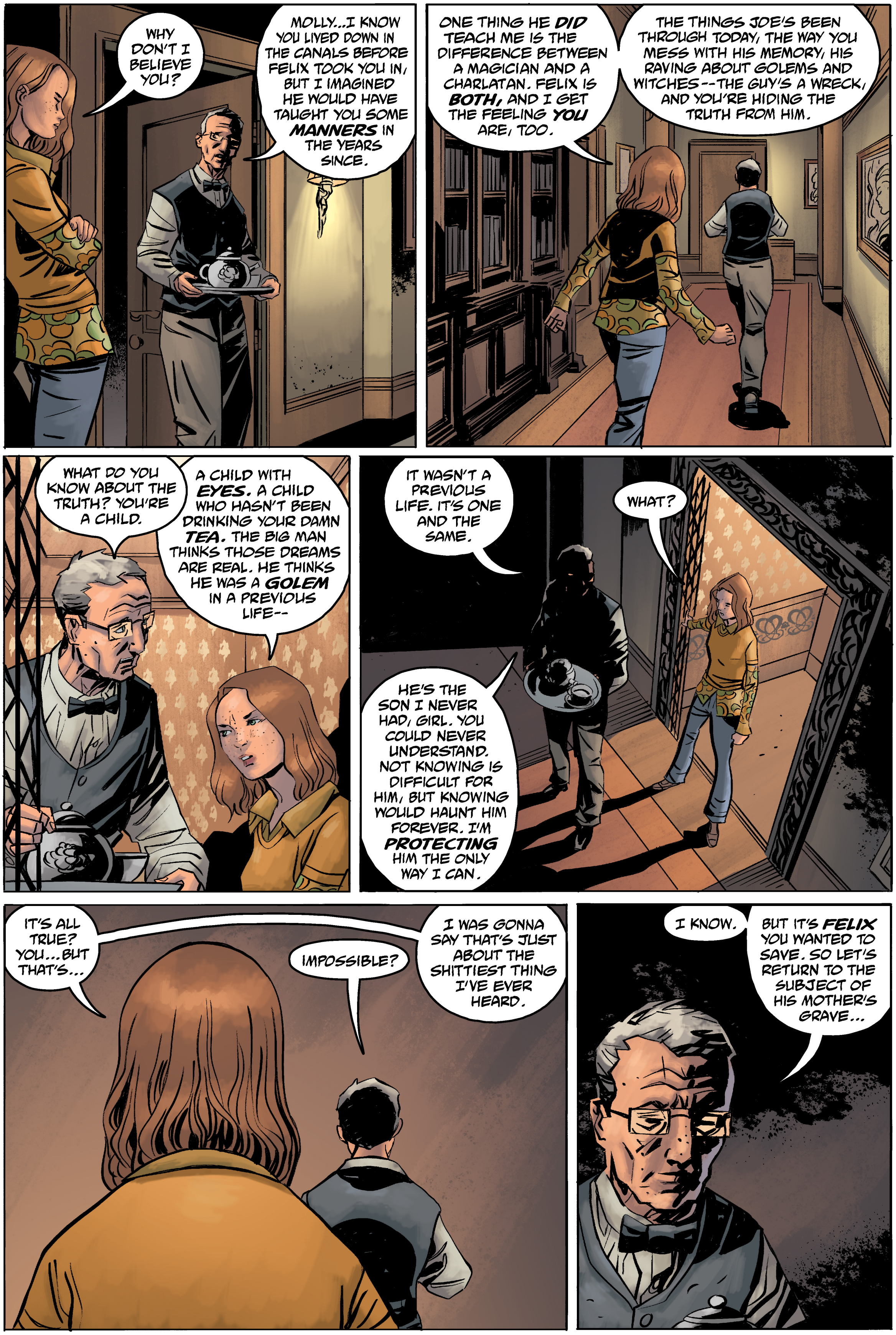

"WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE."
I'M LUCKY TO BE STANDING AT ALL.
YOU'VE HAD A DREADFUL DAY, MY BOY. I KNOW IT, AND I'M AFRAID IT'S NOT GOING TO GET ANY EASIER.
FELL A DOZEN STORIES FROM A WINDOW EARLIER. NOW I ALMOST DROWNED. MAYBE LATER, SOMEONE'LL SET ME ON FIRE...
BUT I'LL TELL YOU SOME-THING, **SIMON.** I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE ELSE TODAY BEFORE I GET SOME ANSWERS FROM YOU.


I HAD ANOTHER DREAM--DROWNING, HALF-DEAD--WITH THE GOLEM IN IT. KILLING WITCHES, SAVING THIS LITTLE GIRL ON A FROZEN RIVER, AND IT'S ENOUGH NOW.
YOU SAY MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF CRAZY ANCESTRAL MEMORY. YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU DO? FIND EXPLANATIONS FOR THINGS?
JOE, YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN. WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS.
SO MANY TIMES I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER THEM ALL. YOU DON'T WANT ME TO REMEMBER THEM ALL!
MY FRIEND, YOU DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER THEM ALL. IT'S TOO DIFFICULT FOR--
WHAPP
DON'T TELL ME WHAT I WANT. AND DON'T THINK I'M DRINKING ANY OF THAT DAMN TEA.
THAT'S UP TO YOU, JOSEPH. BUT YOU KNOW THE TEA HELPS CALM YOU, HELPS YOU SLEEP.
I'M SO DAMN TIRED ALL THE TIME...
"...SO DAMN TIRED."
WHAT THE F--

I HATE THIS. YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I HATE THIS.
I KNOW YOU DO. AND I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO DRINK LESS OF MY SPECIAL HERBAL. BUT THESE DREAMS--YOU'VE GOT A HOLE WHERE YOUR REAL MEMORIES SHOULD BE...
...AND THESE VIVID IMAGINATIONS RUSH IN TO FILL THAT HOLE.
THEY'RE LIKE A ROT THAT SETS IN AND STARTS TO UNRAVEL YOUR MIND. IF YOU GIVE IT ROOM, IT STARTS TO SPREAD...
"...AND SOON ENOUGH, THERE'LL BE NO ROOM LEFT INSIDE FOR THE REAL YOU."
THIS IS BULLSHIT.
TEK

I HATE THIS. MY MEMORIES... FRIENDS...EVEN THE CASES WE'VE SOLVED HAVE A BLUR TO THEM FROM ALL OF THIS. AND THE DREAMS OF THE GOLEM...
LISTEN TO ME, SON.
I'VE EXPLAINED THIS BEFORE, BUT IT'S ONE OF THE MEMORIES YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO LOSE. WE'VE BEEN TO THE DOCTOR TOGETHER, YOU AND I. MANY TIMES...
"IT'S A SICKNESS, THIS. A SICKNESS OF THE MIND."
YOU'VE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA. AN EXTREME PSYCHOSIS FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH HALLUCINATIONS, DELUSIONS, AND AN INABILITY TO TELL REALITY FROM FANTASY.
YOU'RE FORTUNATE, IN A WAY, THAT YOUR SCHIZOPHRENIC BREAKS COME IN THE FORM OF THESE DREAMS, BUT IF YOU ALLOW THEM TO FRAY YOUR GRASP OF WHAT'S REAL...

WELL...THE TEA HELPS YOU FORGET THEM. AND FORGETTING HELPS YOU LIVE A NORMAL LIFE.
IT JUST SEEMS SO **REAL.**
I KNOW, MY FRIEND.
I KNOW.

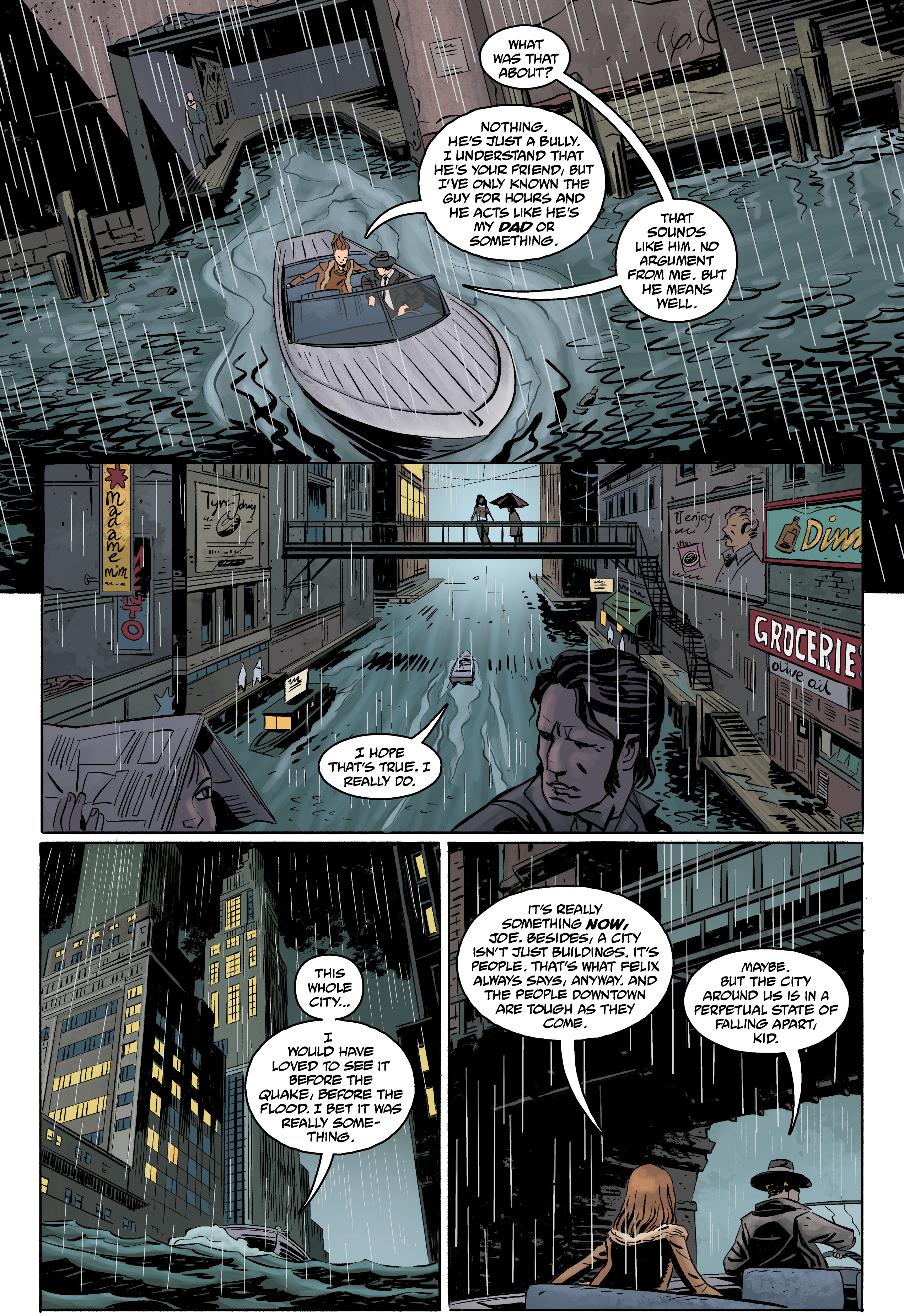

WHY DON'T I BELIEVE YOU?
MOLLY...I KNOW YOU LIVED DOWN IN THE CANALS BEFORE FELIX TOOK YOU IN, BUT I IMAGINED HE WOULD HAVE TAUGHT YOU SOME MANNERS IN THE YEARS SINCE.
ONE THING HE DID TEACH ME IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MAGICIAN AND A CHARLATAN. FELIX IS BOTH, AND I GET THE FEELING YOU ARE, TOO.
THE THINGS JOE'S BEEN THROUGH TODAY, THE WAY YOU MESS WITH HIS MEMORY, HIS RAVING ABOUT GOLEMS AND WITCHES--THE GUY'S A WRECK, AND YOU'RE HIDING THE TRUTH FROM HIM.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE TRUTH? YOU'RE A CHILD.
A CHILD WITH EYES. A CHILD WHO HASN'T BEEN DRINKING YOUR DAMN TEA. THE BIG MAN THINKS THOSE DREAMS ARE REAL. HE THINKS HE WAS A GOLEM IN A PREVIOUS LIFE--
IT WASN'T A PREVIOUS LIFE. IT'S ONE AND THE SAME.
WHAT?
HE'S THE SON I NEVER HAD, GIRL. YOU COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND. NOT KNOWING IS DIFFICULT FOR HIM, BUT KNOWING WOULD HAUNT HIM FOREVER. I'M PROTECTING HIM THE ONLY WAY I CAN.
IT'S ALL TRUE? YOU...BUT THAT'S...
IMPOSSIBLE?
I WAS GONNA SAY THAT'S JUST ABOUT THE SHITTIEST THING I'VE EVER HEARD.
I KNOW.
BUT IT'S FELIX YOU WANTED TO SAVE. SO LET'S RETURN TO THE SUBJECT OF HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE...

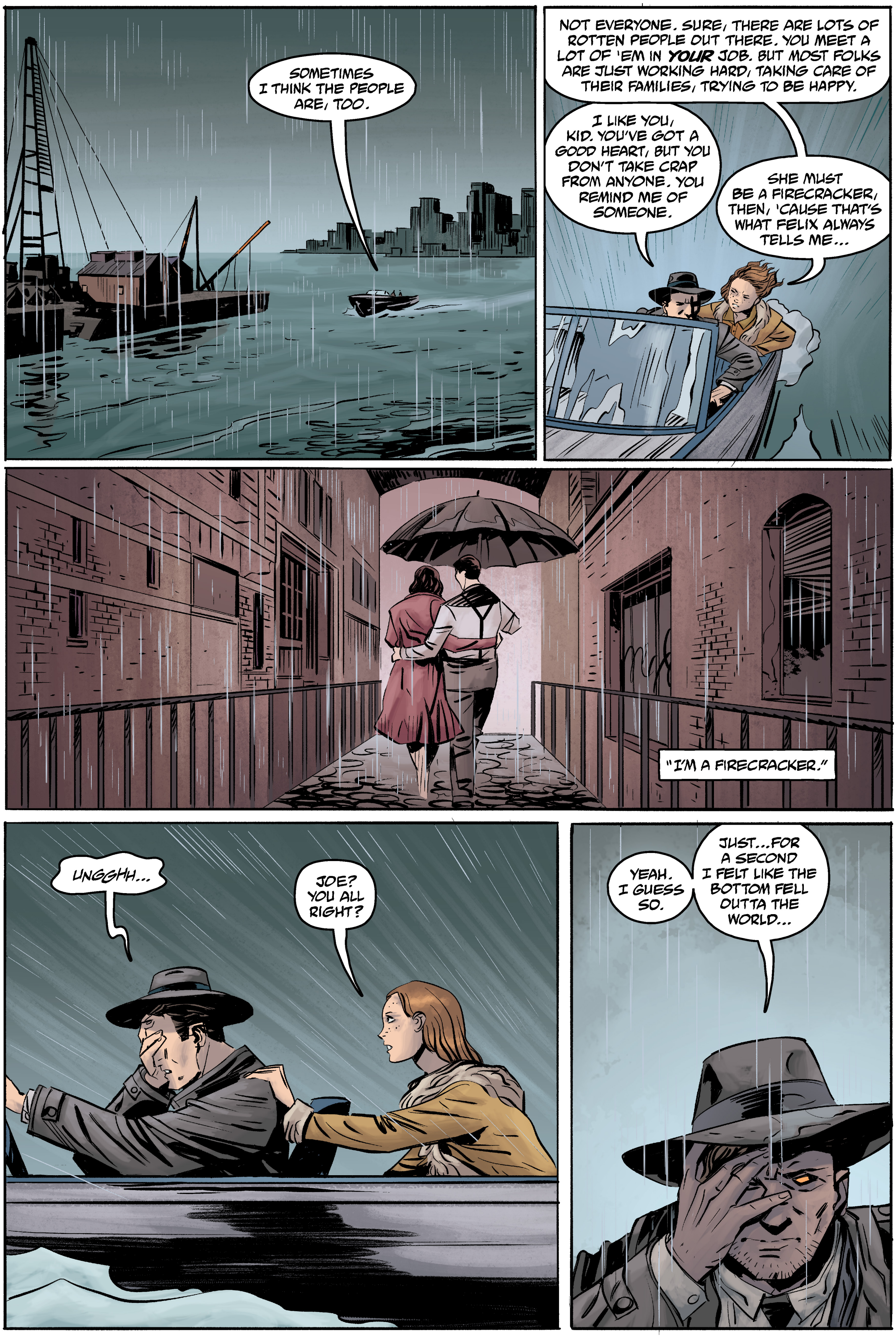
ELSEWHERE...
WHERE...
WHERE AM I?
AWAKE AT LAST.
WHAT AM I?

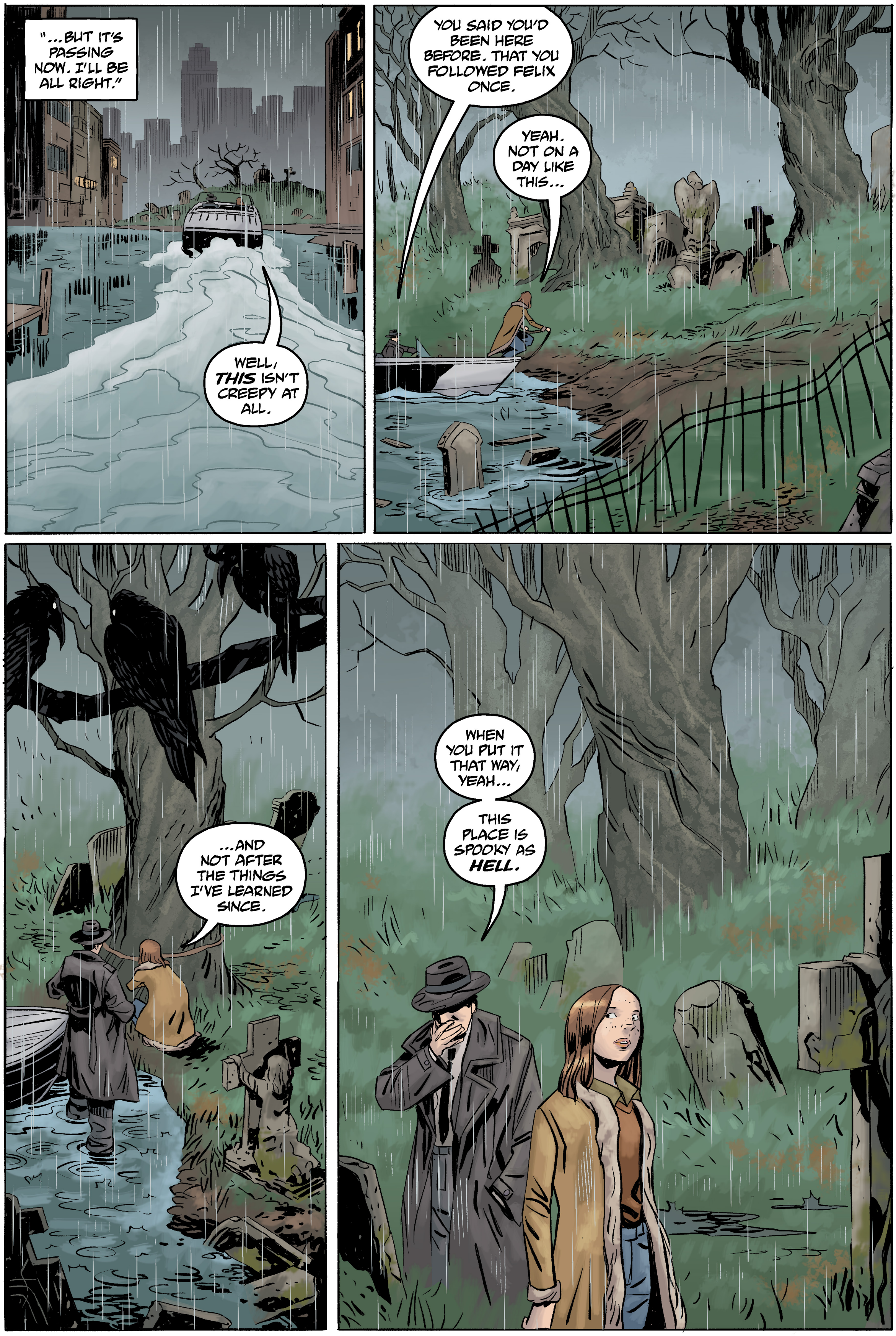
A NEW MAN, FELIX. YOU'RE A NEW MAN.
WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?
YOU MISUNDERSTAND, "CONJUROR." I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOUR LIFE FOR DECADES, RESEARCHING YOUR CAREER...
"...I EVEN SAW YOU ON THE STAGE ONCE, WHEN I WAS A VERY SMALL BOY.
"YOU WERE EXCELLENT, BY THE WAY."
WHAT AM I? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
IT'S NOTHING I'M DOING. THIS IS YOUR NATURAL METAMORPHOSIS. YOU'RE DOING IT TO YOURSELF.
THE EYES OF THE OUTER DARK ARE WATCHING. THEIR ATTENTION TURNS TOWARD US EVEN NOW. I'M SURE OF IT.

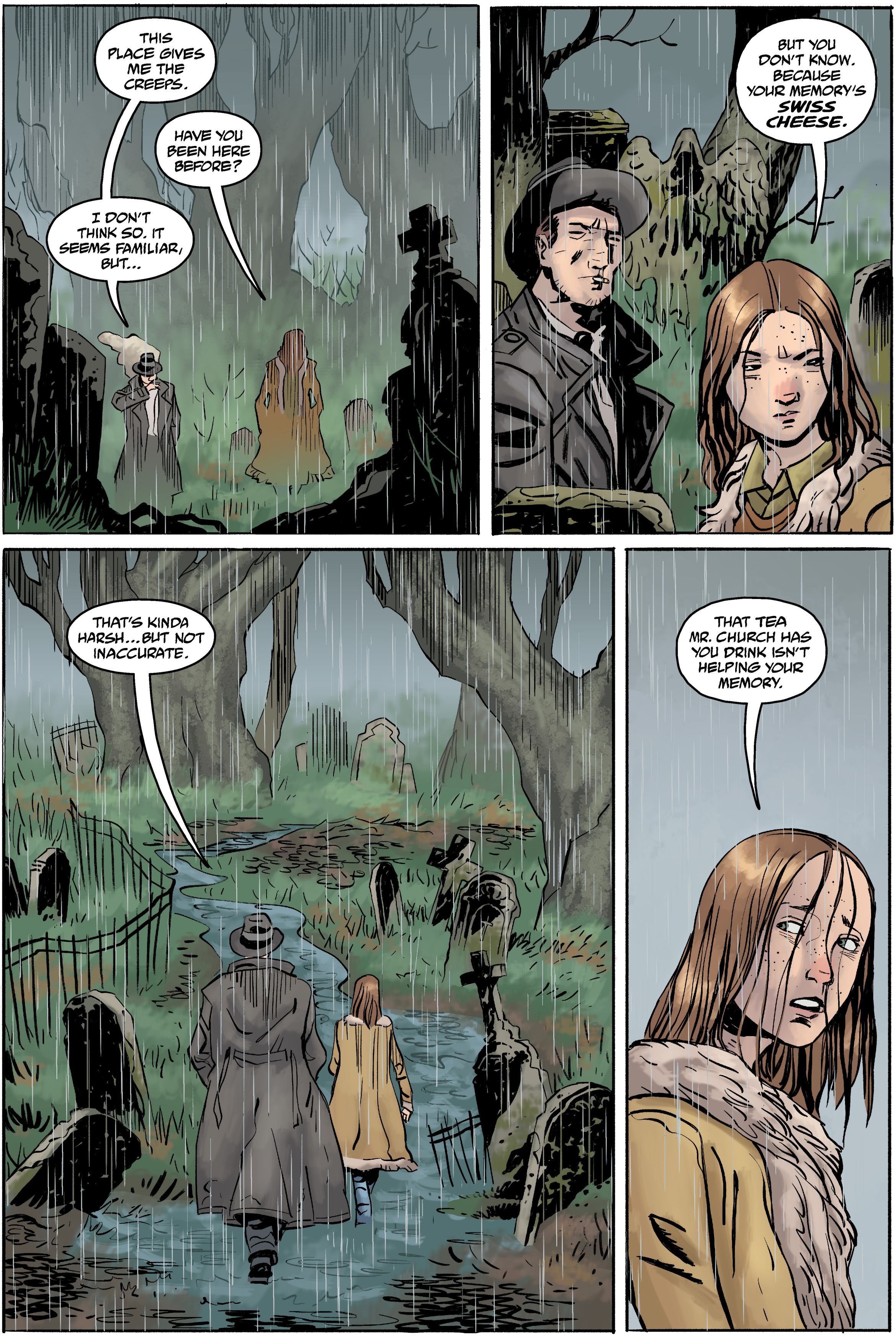
ONCE I HAVE LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM, I'LL BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM. WITH YOU DRAWING THEIR ATTENTION, AND WITH MY APPARATUS TO AMPLIFY...
THEY'LL LISTEN TO MY INQUIRIES. I ***KNOW*** THEY WILL.
ALL I NEED IS THE PENTAJULUM... BUT I NEED IT NOW, FELIX. ***TONIGHT.***
YOU WILL HELP ME LOCATE IT. AND IF YOU REFUSE--
MASTER.
YOU'VE RETURNED EMPTY-HANDED. WHERE IS THE DETECTIVE? WHERE IS THE GIRL?
THE DETECTIVE... IS DEAD. HE KILLED ONE OF OURS. INJURED OTHERS. WE DON'T KNOW WHERE HE TOOK THE GIRL BEFORE THAT...
HHURRKK
SO YOU CAME SCURRYING BACK HERE, TAILS BETWEEN YOUR LEGS, WITHOUT THE GIRL? AND YOU TELL ME SIMON CHURCH'S PET IS DEAD, BUT YOU HAVEN'T BROUGHT ME A ***BODY?***

"...YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO BETTER THAN THAT."
YOU'RE PUTTING THE GIRL IN UNNECESSARY DANGER, JOE. YOU CAN FIND CYNTHIA ORLOV'S GRAVE WITHOUT HER HELP. SHE'S JUST--
WHAT ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT? LEAVING ME WITH HIM...OR LEAVING ***HIM*** WITH ***ME?***
I'VE ***BEEN*** TO THIS CEMETERY BEFORE. I FOLLOWED FELIX THERE, ONCE. I SAW HIM GO TO HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE, AND TO A ***SECOND*** ONE--A GRAVE WITH A TREE GROWING OUT OF IT. JOE NEEDS ME.
PERHAPS HE DOES. BUT IF YOU FIND THERE ARE THINGS ***OTHER*** THAN GRAVES THAT YOU WISH TO DISCUSS WITH HIM...ASK YOURSELF WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE.
HIS MIND IS LITTLE MORE THAN BROKEN CHINA THAT I KEEP REPAIRING AS BEST I CAN. I AM IN A CONSTANT BATTLE TO KEEP IT FROM ***SHATTERING*** ALTOGETHER.
REMEMBER WHAT I SAID.
I SURE WON'T FORGET IT.

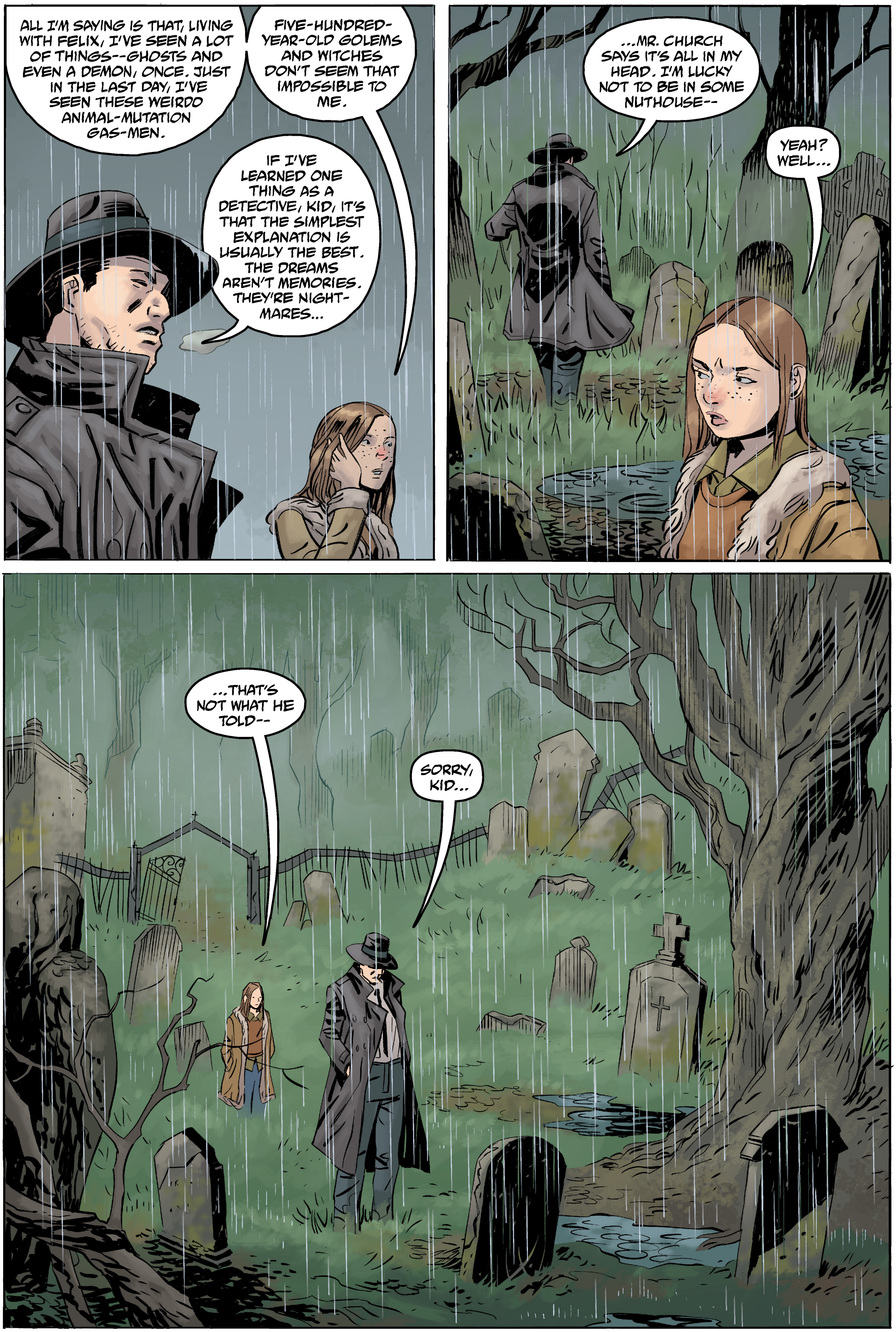

WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
NOTHING. HE'S JUST A BULLY. I UNDERSTAND THAT HE'S YOUR FRIEND, BUT I'VE ONLY KNOWN THE GUY FOR HOURS AND HE ACTS LIKE HE'S MY **DAD** OR SOMETHING.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE HIM. NO ARGUMENT FROM ME. BUT HE MEANS WELL.
madame mim
GROCERIES
olive oil
I HOPE THAT'S TRUE. I REALLY DO.
THIS WHOLE CITY...
I WOULD HAVE LOVED TO SEE IT BEFORE THE QUAKE, BEFORE THE FLOOD. I BET IT WAS REALLY SOME-THING.
IT'S REALLY SOMETHING **NOW,** JOE. BESIDES, A CITY ISN'T JUST BUILDINGS. IT'S PEOPLE. THAT'S WHAT FELIX ALWAYS SAYS, ANYWAY. AND THE PEOPLE DOWNTOWN ARE TOUGH AS THEY COME.
MAYBE. BUT THE CITY AROUND US IS IN A PERPETUAL STATE OF FALLING APART, KID.

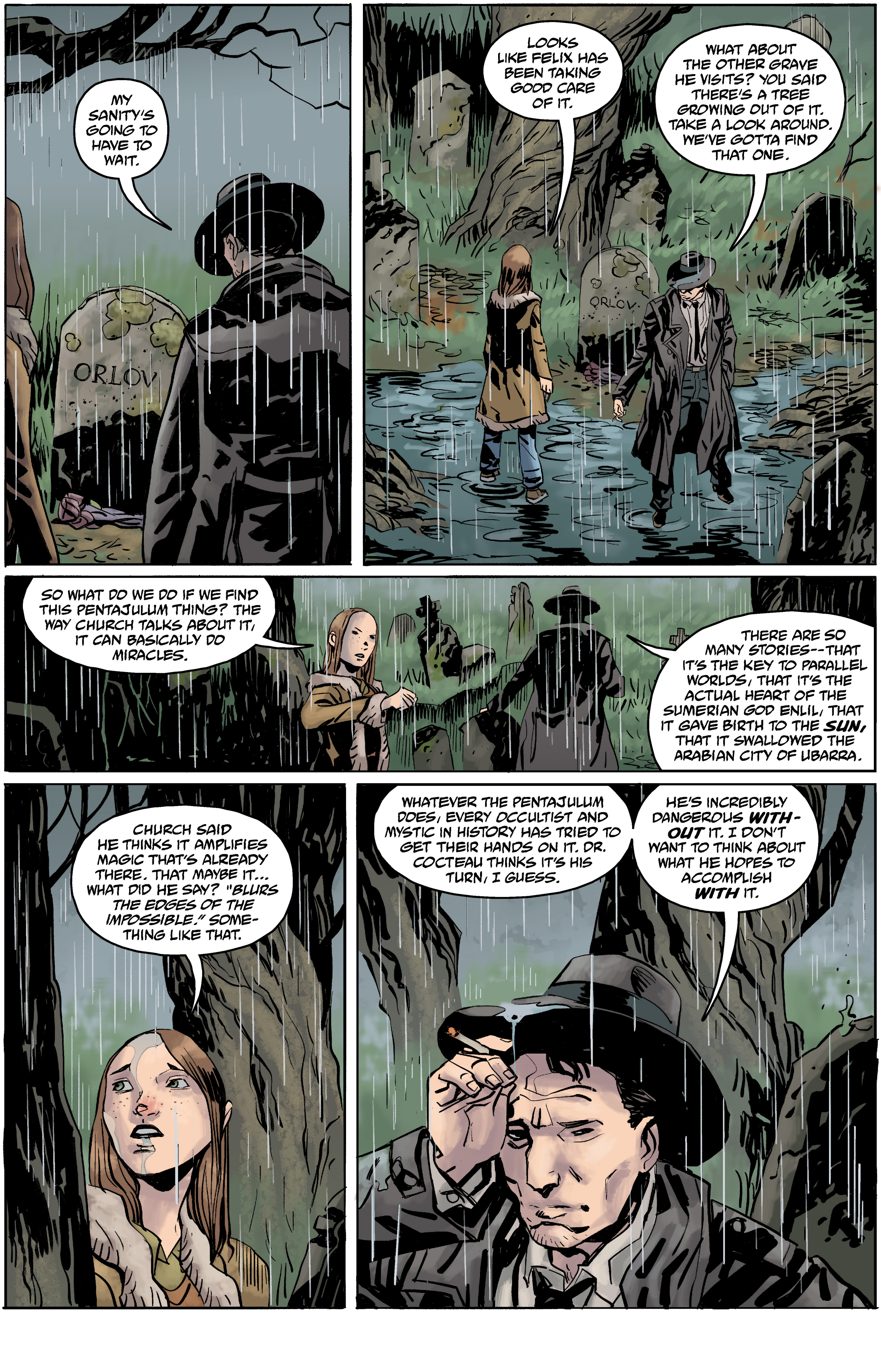

SOMETIMES I THINK THE PEOPLE ARE, TOO.
NOT EVERYONE. SURE, THERE ARE LOTS OF ROTTEN PEOPLE OUT THERE. YOU MEET A LOT OF 'EM IN **YOUR** JOB. BUT MOST FOLKS ARE JUST WORKING HARD, TAKING CARE OF THEIR FAMILIES, TRYING TO BE HAPPY.
I LIKE YOU, KID. YOU'VE GOT A GOOD HEART, BUT YOU DON'T TAKE CRAP FROM ANYONE. YOU REMIND ME OF SOMEONE.
SHE MUST BE A FIRECRACKER, THEN, 'CAUSE THAT'S WHAT FELIX ALWAYS TELLS ME...
"I'M A FIRECRACKER."
UNGGHH...
JOE? YOU ALL RIGHT?
YEAH. I GUESS SO.
JUST...FOR A SECOND I FELT LIKE THE BOTTOM FELL OUTTA THE WORLD...

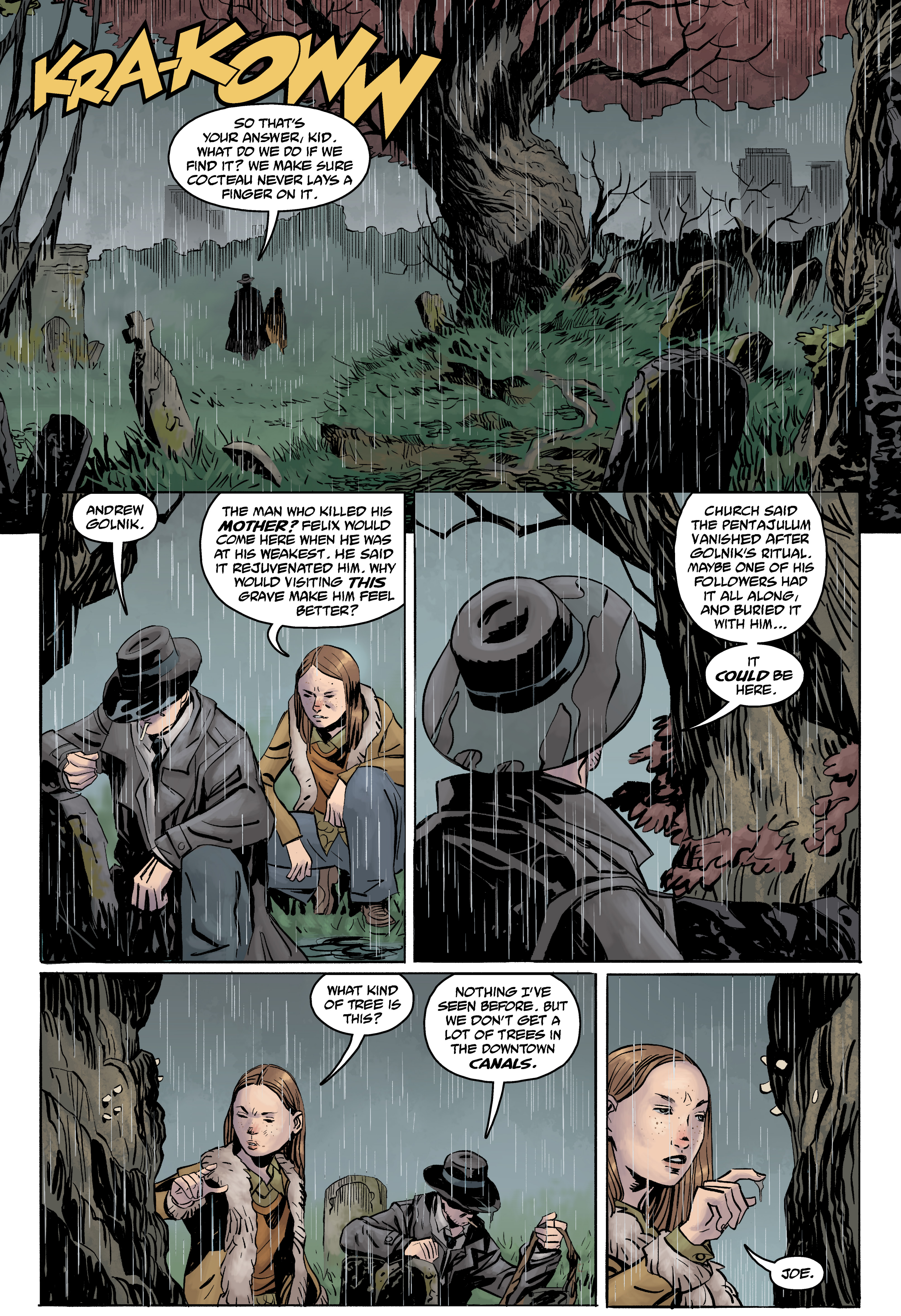

"...BUT IT'S PASSING NOW. I'LL BE ALL RIGHT."
WELL, THIS ISN'T CREEPY AT ALL.
YOU SAID YOU'D BEEN HERE BEFORE. THAT YOU FOLLOWED FELIX ONCE.
YEAH. NOT ON A DAY LIKE THIS...
...AND NOT AFTER THE THINGS I'VE LEARNED SINCE.
WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, YEAH...
THIS PLACE IS SPOOKY AS HELL.


THIS PLACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE?
I DON'T THINK SO. IT SEEMS FAMILIAR, BUT...
BUT YOU DON'T KNOW. BECAUSE YOUR MEMORY'S **SWISS CHEESE.**
THAT'S KINDA HARSH...BUT NOT INACCURATE.
THAT TEA MR. CHURCH HAS YOU DRINK ISN'T HELPING YOUR MEMORY.

HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?
I WAS THERE WHEN YOU CAME BACK TODAY, REMEMBER? OR MAYBE YOU DON'T. YOU WERE PRETTY UPSET. HE MADE YOU DRINK THAT TEA--
HE DIDN'T MAKE ME.
HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN GIVING YOU THAT STUFF TO DRINK? HOW MANY TIMES HAS HE USED IT TO CALM YOU DOWN OR TO MAKE YOUR NIGHTMARES GO AWAY?
THAT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU?
I... DON'T KNOW.
I DON'T FORGET IT ALL. THERE ARE...ECHOES, I GUESS. FROM THE DREAMS.
THE DREAMS OF THE GOLEM? KILLING WITCHES, YOU SAID?
I DID? YEAH, I GUESS I MIGHT HAVE SAID THAT. I DO REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT WITCHES.
THING IS, JOE...CHURCH WANTS YOU TO THINK YOU'RE SOME KIND OF PSYCHO, BUT YOU FELL A DOZEN STORIES INTO THE CANAL TODAY AND YOU'RE FINE. NOT A SINGLE BROKEN BONE...
YOU EVER START TO WONDER IF MAYBE THOSE DREAMS AREN'T DREAMS AT ALL... THAT MAYBE THEY'RE MEMORIES?
THAT I'VE GOT THE MEMORIES OF A FIVE-HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD GOLEM? THAT'S STUPID. I MEAN...LOOK AT ME. BETTER YET, LOOK AT MR. CHURCH.
HE'S STRUGGLED TO EXTEND HIS LIFE WITH MAGIC, BUT AFTER A CENTURY HE STARTED FADING, AND NOW HE'S IN ROUGH SHAPE.


ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT, LIVING WITH FELIX, I'VE SEEN A LOT OF THINGS--GHOSTS AND EVEN A DEMON, ONCE. JUST IN THE LAST DAY, I'VE SEEN THESE WEIRDO ANIMAL-MUTATION GAS-MEN.
FIVE-HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD GOLEMS AND WITCHES DON'T SEEM THAT IMPOSSIBLE TO ME.
IF I'VE LEARNED ONE THING AS A DETECTIVE, KID, IT'S THAT THE SIMPLEST EXPLANATION IS USUALLY THE BEST. THE DREAMS AREN'T MEMORIES. THEY'RE NIGHT-MARES...
...MR. CHURCH SAYS IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD. I'M LUCKY NOT TO BE IN SOME NUTHOUSE--
YEAH? WELL...
...THAT'S NOT WHAT HE TOLD--
SORRY, KID...


MY SANITY'S GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT.
LOOKS LIKE FELIX HAS BEEN TAKING GOOD CARE OF IT.
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER GRAVE HE VISITS? YOU SAID THERE'S A TREE GROWING OUT OF IT. TAKE A LOOK AROUND. WE'VE GOTTA FIND THAT ONE.
ORLOV
SO WHAT DO WE DO IF WE FIND THIS PENTAJULUM THING? THE WAY CHURCH TALKS ABOUT IT, IT CAN BASICALLY DO MIRACLES.
THERE ARE SO MANY STORIES--THAT IT'S THE KEY TO PARALLEL WORLDS, THAT IT'S THE ACTUAL HEART OF THE SUMERIAN GOD ENLIL, THAT IT GAVE BIRTH TO THE **SUN,** THAT IT SWALLOWED THE ARABIAN CITY OF UBARRA.
CHURCH SAID HE THINKS IT AMPLIFIES MAGIC THAT'S ALREADY THERE. THAT MAYBE IT... WHAT DID HE SAY? "BLURS THE EDGES OF THE IMPOSSIBLE." SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
WHATEVER THE PENTAJULUM DOES, EVERY OCCULTIST AND MYSTIC IN HISTORY HAS TRIED TO GET THEIR HANDS ON IT. DR. COCTEAU THINKS IT'S HIS TURN, I GUESS.
HE'S INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS ***WITHOUT*** IT. I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT WHAT HE HOPES TO ACCOMPLISH ***WITH*** IT.


KRA-KOWW
SO THAT'S YOUR ANSWER, KID. WHAT DO WE DO IF WE FIND IT? WE MAKE SURE COCTEAU NEVER LAYS A FINGER ON IT.
ANDREW GOLNIK.
THE MAN WHO KILLED HIS MOTHER? FELIX WOULD COME HERE WHEN HE WAS AT HIS WEAKEST. HE SAID IT REJUVENATED HIM. WHY WOULD VISITING THIS GRAVE MAKE HIM FEEL BETTER?
CHURCH SAID THE PENTAJULUM VANISHED AFTER GOLNIK'S RITUAL. MAYBE ONE OF HIS FOLLOWERS HAD IT ALL ALONG, AND BURIED IT WITH HIM...
IT COULD BE HERE.
WHAT KIND OF TREE IS THIS?
NOTHING I'VE SEEN BEFORE. BUT WE DON'T GET A LOT OF TREES IN THE DOWNTOWN CANALS.
JOE.

THE WOOD'S SOFT... ROTTING. BUT WHAT THE HELL IS--
OH.
STAND BACK.
KRAKK
ANDREW GOLNIK?
IT'S GOTTA BE.
LET'S DIG HIM OUT. IF WE'RE GONNA FIND ANSWERS...
...THIS IS WHERE THEY'LL BE.

WHAT THE--
JOE!
UNGGHH!
SHUNKK
MOLLY!
NO! LET ME GO!
SNAP
NO! PLEASE... JOE...
JOE!

THE DROWNING CITY

Part 4

KRA-KOOOOOM
TAXI
HISSS...
TIK TIK...
HISSS
NOT POSSIBLE.

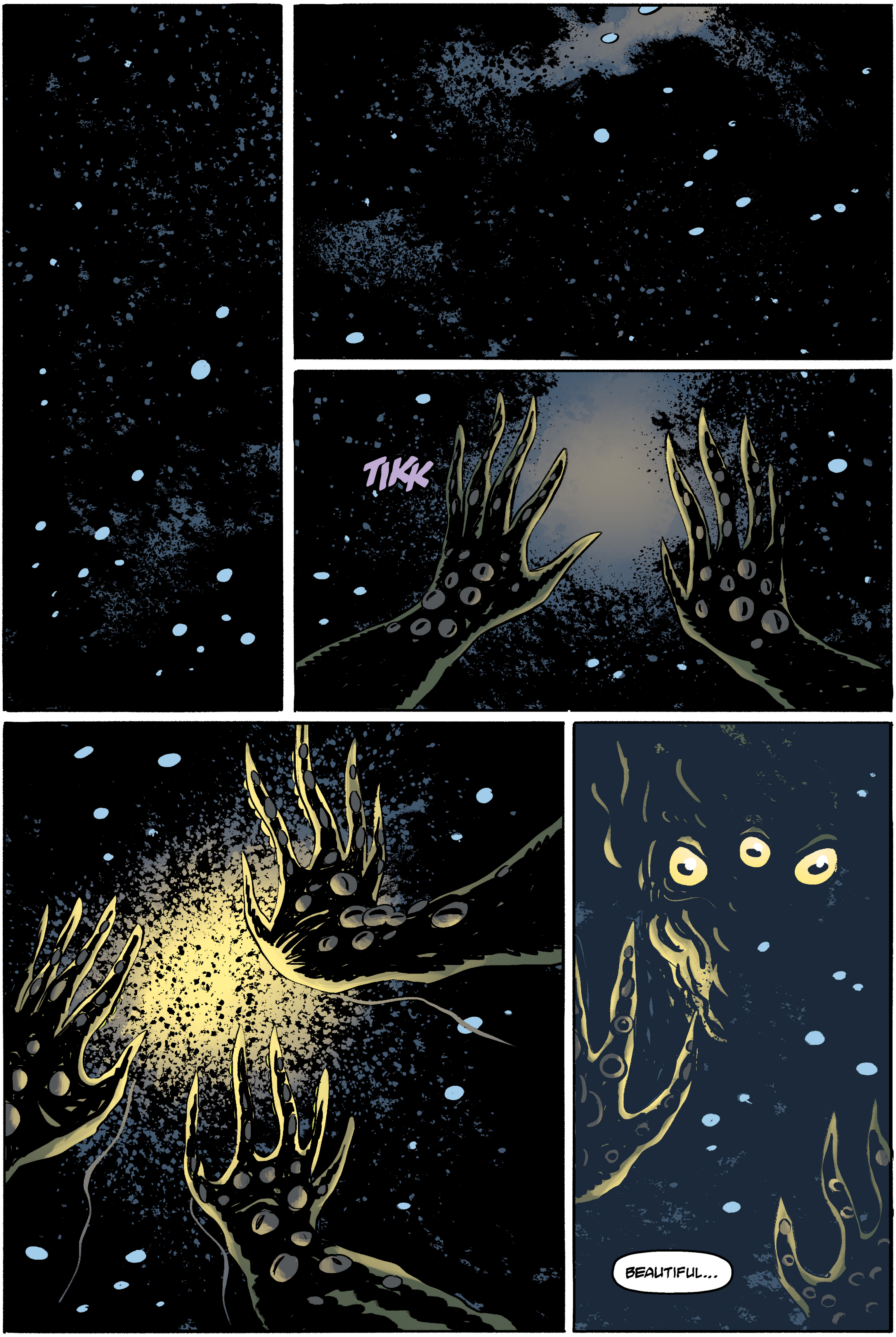
DRIP DRIP DRIP
AND YET I CANNOT DISTRUST MY OWN INSTRUMENTS. NOT WHEN I BUILT THEM WITH MY OWN--
HISSSSSSSSSS
80 100 60 PRESSURE 140 40 180 20 200 0 lb/in
KRAK
NO, NO...
I NEVER THOUGHT...
JOE.
I NEVER SHOULD HAVE...

UNNGGHHH
DAMN IT. NOT NOW.
SKRITCHH
I HAVEN'T THE TIME FOR THIS.
UNGGHHH
YOU OLD FOOL.
I'M SORRY, JOE.

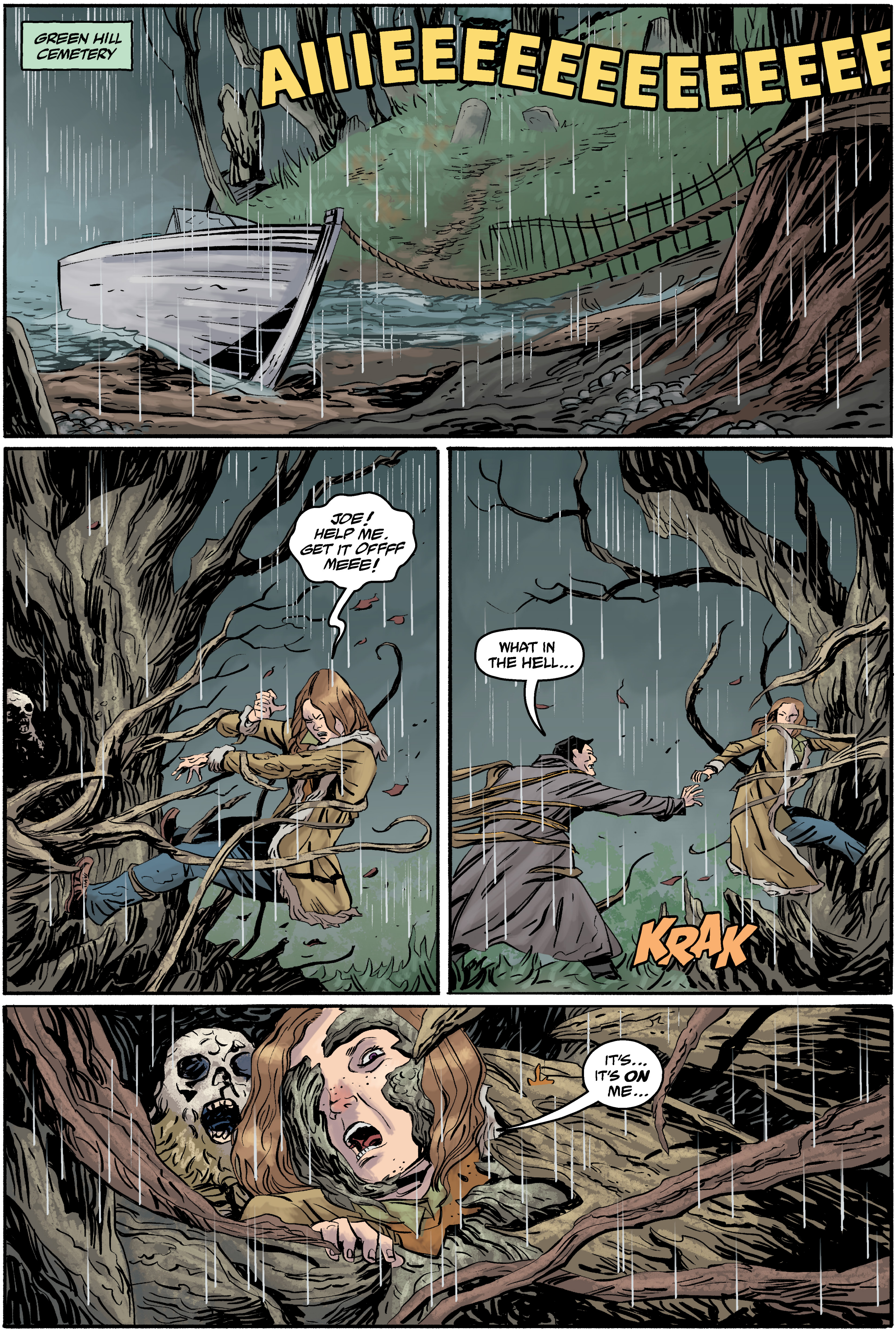
KRASSHH
NOW WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE IS GOING TO CLEAN ALL THAT UP?
MARTHA?
I'VE SEEN YOU IN DIFFICULT SHAPE BEFORE, MR. CHURCH, BUT NEVER LIKE THIS. YOU'VE PUT TOO MUCH STRAIN ON YOURSELF NOW. THIS CAN'T GO ON.
I HAVEN'T ANY CHOICE. THE CITY FACES AN OCCULT CRISIS OF SUCH MAGNITUDE THAT MY INSTRUMENTS ARE FAILING.
IT'S WHY YOU HAVE JOE, ISN'T IT? THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS SAID. YOU'RE NOT YOUNG ANYMORE, SIR. PLEASE, LET HIM HANDLE WHATEVER IT IS.
THIS IS SOMETHING MORE. AN OCCULT ENERGY DISRUPTION LIKE THIS...
WHATEVER'S CAUSING IT, I CAN'T ALLOW JOE TO FACE IT ON HIS OWN.

MR. CHURCH, PLEASE. YOU'RE NOT THE MAN YOU ONCE WERE!
I KNOW THAT, MARTHA...
...ALL TOO WELL.
BUT I OWE HIM THIS. I'VE BEEN A MENTOR TO JOE. A FATHER. A FRIEND...
...I HAVE GIVEN HIM A GOOD LIFE, BUT I'VE BEEN SELFISH, TOO. AND NOW HE NEEDS ME. I MUST GO.
DID YOU CALL ME A WATER TAXI?
I DID. YOU'RE AN OLD FOOL...
...BUT YOU'RE STILL THE BOSS.
THANK YOU, MARTHA.
DON'T WAIT UP.

OH.
MR. CHURCH? ARE YOU--
UNGGHH!
THUMP
THUMPTHUMP
DEAR GOD... NO...


TIKK
BEAUTIFUL...

...SO BEAUTIFUL.
DON'T WORRY, MY FRIEND...
...IT WON'T BE LONG NOW.


GREEN HILL CEMETERY
AIIIEEEEEEEEEEEEE
JOE! HELP ME. GET IT OFFFF MEEE!
WHAT IN THE HELL...
KRAK
IT'S... IT'S ON ME...

I'M COMING, KID! JUST LET ME...
KRIK
THRAKK
PLEASE...
REACH FOR ME, MOLLY! REACH--
SPLLURRCCKKK
HHSSSS
GAHHH!
WHAT?
WHAT IS IT?

AIIIE!
THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT.
KRAK
SHRAK
MMFFFFF
HURRRKK
GGGHHH
HRRNNN

WHATEVER YOU ARE...
SNAP
...YOU CAN'T HAVE HER!
HURRRKK
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
SPLITTCHH SPLITCCH

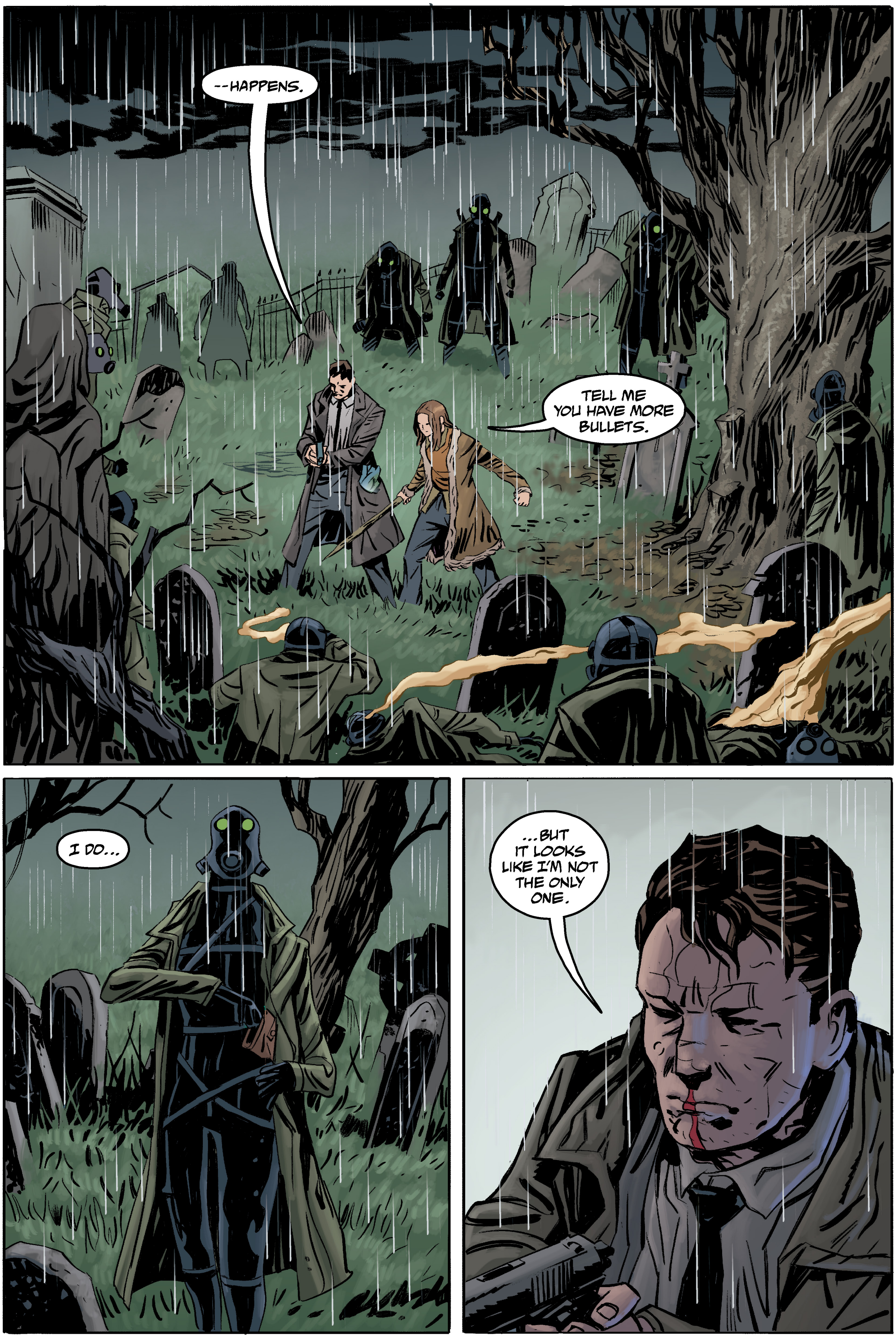
BREATHE, KID...
KRAKK
SHRKK
...I'VE GOT YOU.
I THOUGHT... OH MY GOD, I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO--
MOLLY...
DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

I'LL BE DAMNED.
IS THAT...?
YEAH. LECTOR'S PENTAJULUM.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. HOW COULD IT HAVE GOTTEN INSIDE OF HIM?
IMPOSSIBLE IS THE WHOLE POINT. IT'S WHY THIS THING EXISTS.
MAYBE WHEN MR. CHURCH SHOT GOLNIK, ALL THOSE YEARS AGO, HIS BODY ABSORBED IT SOMEHOW.

THAT'S FREAKY AND DISGUSTING. BUT THE WAY CHURCH TALKED ABOUT IT, I GUESS NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THIS THING CAN OR CAN'T DO.
JUST HOLDING IT GIVES ME THE SHIVERS. IT FEELS LIKE IT'S...
...AWAKE. LIKE IT'S AWARE OF US.
WHATEVER HAPPENED WITH THE TREE JUST NOW... YEAH, IT MIGHT'VE BEEN GOLNIK'S MAGIC, SOME CURSE HE LEFT BEHIND, BUT I DON'T THINK SO. I THINK IT WAS THIS THING...
...I THINK IT WANTED OUT.
PUT IT AWAY. PLEASE. I DON'T EVEN WANT TO SEE THE THING. LET'S JUST GET IT TO MR. CHURCH AND--
SNAP
DID YOU HEAR SOME-THING?

SPLUT
SPLINK
SPATT
NOT AGAIN.
CRAP. THEY MUST'VE KEPT TAILING ME ALL ALONG.
BACK OFF, BOYS. YOU'RE NOT GETTING WHAT YOU CAME FOR.
JOE, THERE ARE MORE!
COME ON! WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!
BLAM
PUFFFT

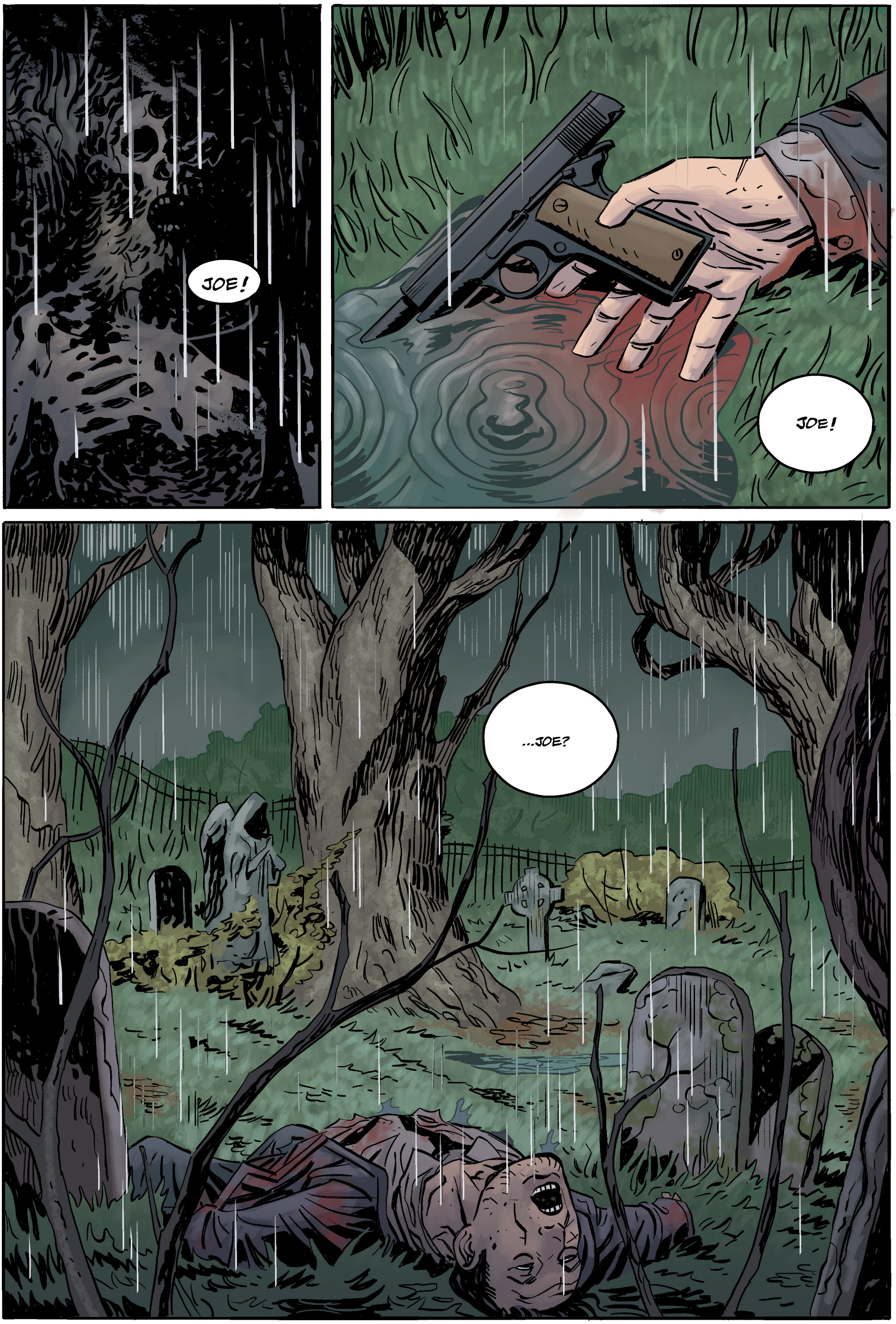
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
KRAKK
PFFT PFFT PFFT
ARE YOUR DAYS ALWAYS LIKE THIS?
WHAKK
NOT TILL I MET YOU.
SHRRRUNKK
BLAMMM
LET'S MOVE, KID. BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE--


--HAPPENS.
TELL ME YOU HAVE MORE BULLETS.
I DO...
...BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE.

GET DOWN, MOLLY!
BLAM
AND STAY DOWN!
SHUKK
UNGGHH

BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLAM
BLAM
JOE!
THUKK
THUKK
THUKK
THUKK
OH, YOU BASTARDS...
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
GET AWAY FROM HIM!
TAKE HER.

BLAM
JOE!


JOE!
JOE!
...JOE?

THE DROWNING CITY

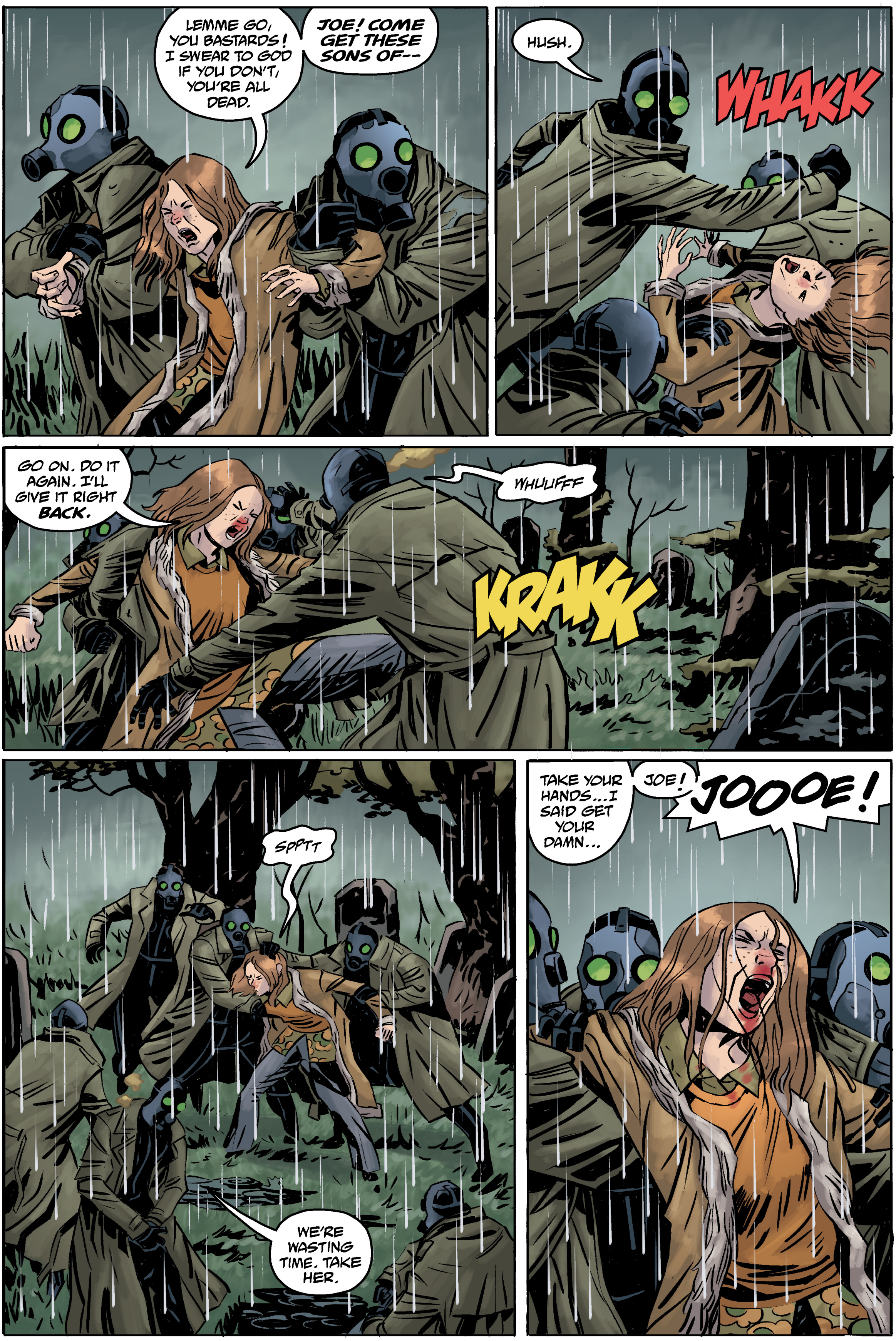
Part 5

IT ISN'T CROATIA.
NOT REALLY.
NOR IS THIS THE GACKA RIVER.
IT'S THE MEMORY OF THE PLACE. THE SPIRIT OF THE RIVER.
IT'S A PEACEFUL DREAM OF A TIME WHEN THE WITCHES HAVE ALL BEEN KILLED OR DRIVEN FROM THE VALLEY...
...A TIME WHEN HIS PURPOSE HAS BEEN FULFILLED AND HE OWES NO MORE TO GOD OR TO THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES...

A DREAM, A MEMORY, OF A TIME WHEN HE CAN FINALLY REST...
THIS IS THE PROMISE OF HEAVEN.
A PROMISE THAT HAS BEEN BROKEN.
NO...

OH.
DAMN IT.

HHHNNFFFHHHHHH
FFFFFF.
GOD DAMN...
THAT HURTS.
GGGHHHHHHH
JOE!
JOOOOE!


LEMME GO, YOU BASTARDS! I SWEAR TO GOD IF YOU DON'T, YOU'RE ALL DEAD.
JOE! COME GET THESE SONS OF--
HUSH.
WHAKK
GO ON. DO IT AGAIN. I'LL GIVE IT RIGHT BACK.
WHUUFFF
KRAKK
SPPTT
WE'RE WASTING TIME. TAKE HER.
TAKE YOUR HANDS...I SAID GET YOUR DAMN...
JOE!
JOOOE!

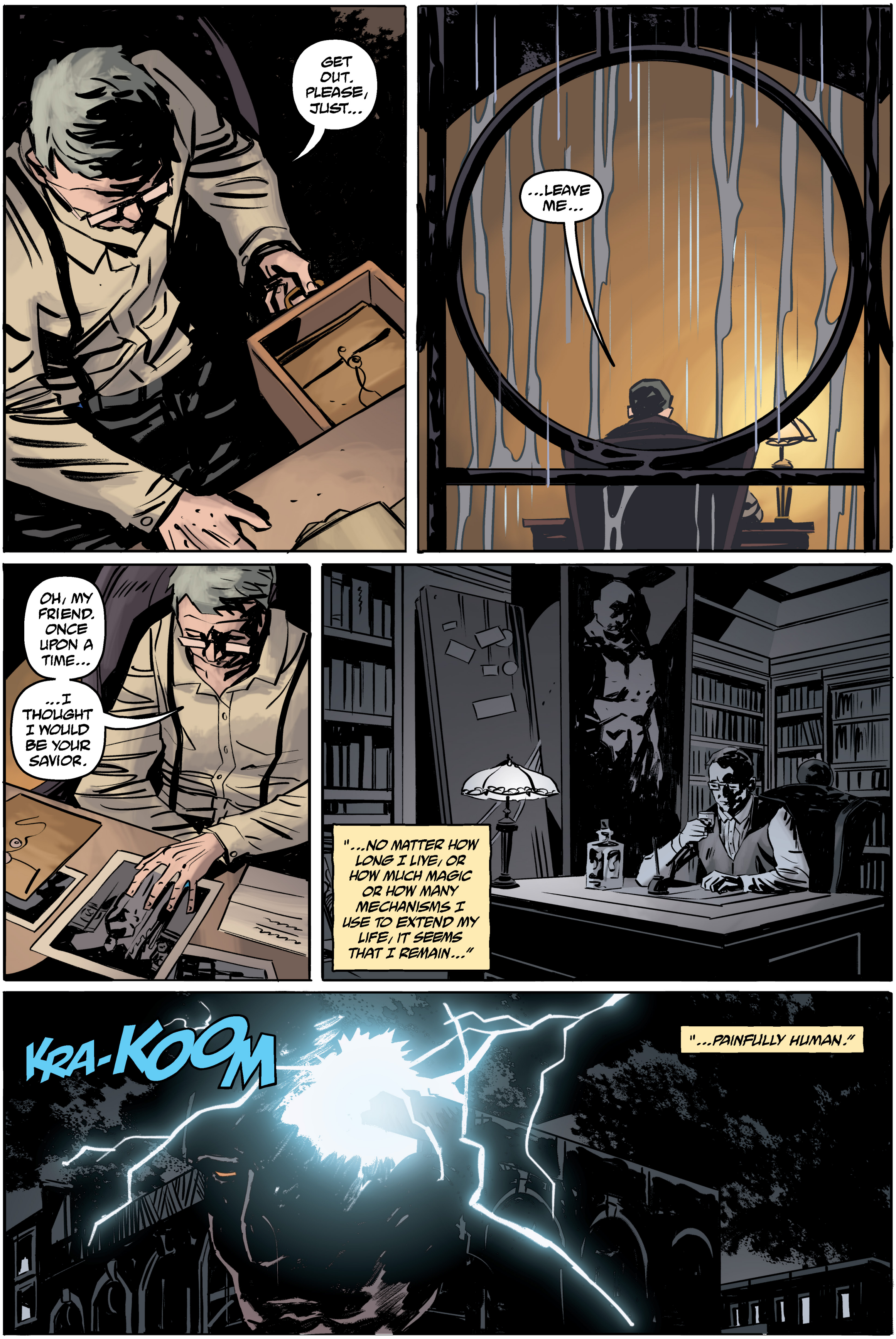
JOOOOOE!
HUNNFF
OH JEEZ
...WHERE...
THE HELL...
SHUT
UP, STUPID
GIRL...
I'M...
I'M COMING,
KID.

"...THE DETECTIVE IS DEAD...
"...HE CANNOT HEAR YOU."
PLIP PLIP PLIP
ARE WE CERTAIN HE IS DEAD? THE MASTER WILL ASK THE QUESTION, AND WE MUST BE ABLE TO ANSWER.
I PUT MANY HOLES IN HIM. NO ONE COULD SURVIVE THAT.
THUDDD
HHUK
KEKK
HOLD HER, YOU IDIOTS!
YOU... YOU THINK I CAN'T SWIM...IF I HAVE TO... IF I...

NO WAY.
JOE!
IF YOU'RE STILL ALIVE OUT THERE, THIS IS NOT A DRILL!
JOOOOOOOOE!
OKAY.

MOLLY...
I'M... I'M COMING, KID...

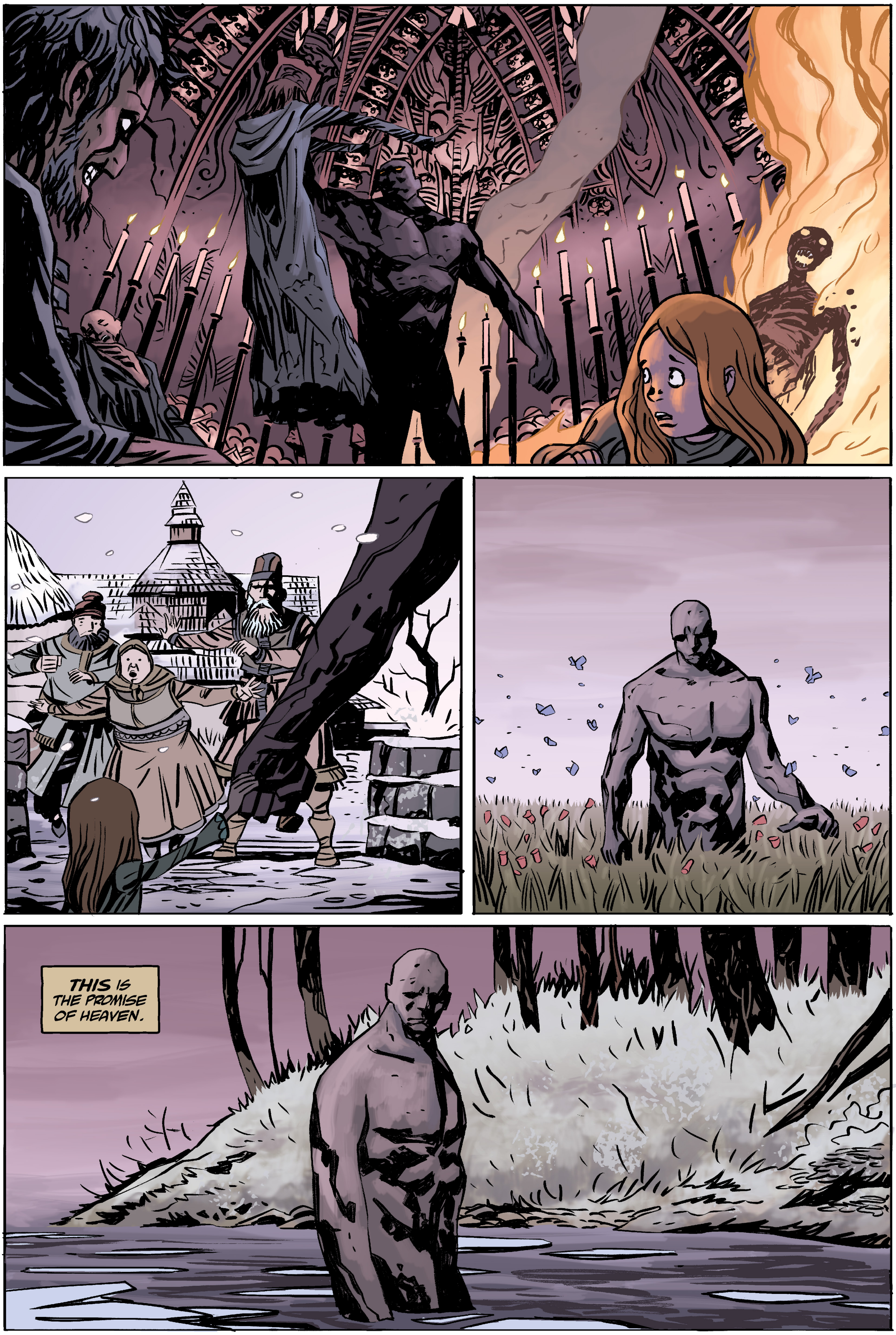
MR. CHURCH, SIR. PLEASE...
YOU REALLY MUST LIE DOWN. YOU'RE NOT **WELL,** MR. CHURCH.
YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME CALL A **DOCTOR.**
I SAID **NO,** DAMN YOU!
AFTER ALL YOU'VE SEEN WHILE WORKING IN THIS HOUSE...
BEETON'S CHRISTMAS ANNUAL
THE ONE-HORSE CAROUSEL
A TALE OF THE DETECTIVE SIMON CHURCH
...DO YOU HONESTLY THINK THERE'S ANYTHING A **DOCTOR** CAN DO FOR **ME?**
JUST GO **HOME,** MARTHA. I INSIST. YOUR PRESENCE IS NO LONGER REQUIRED.
I ABSOLVE YOU OF **ANY** RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD ME.


GET OUT. PLEASE, JUST...
...LEAVE ME...
OH, MY FRIEND. ONCE UPON A TIME...
...I THOUGHT I WOULD BE YOUR SAVIOR.
"...NO MATTER HOW LONG I LIVE, OR HOW MUCH MAGIC OR HOW MANY MECHANISMS I USE TO EXTEND MY LIFE, IT SEEMS THAT I REMAIN..."
KRA-KOOM
"...PAINFULLY HUMAN."

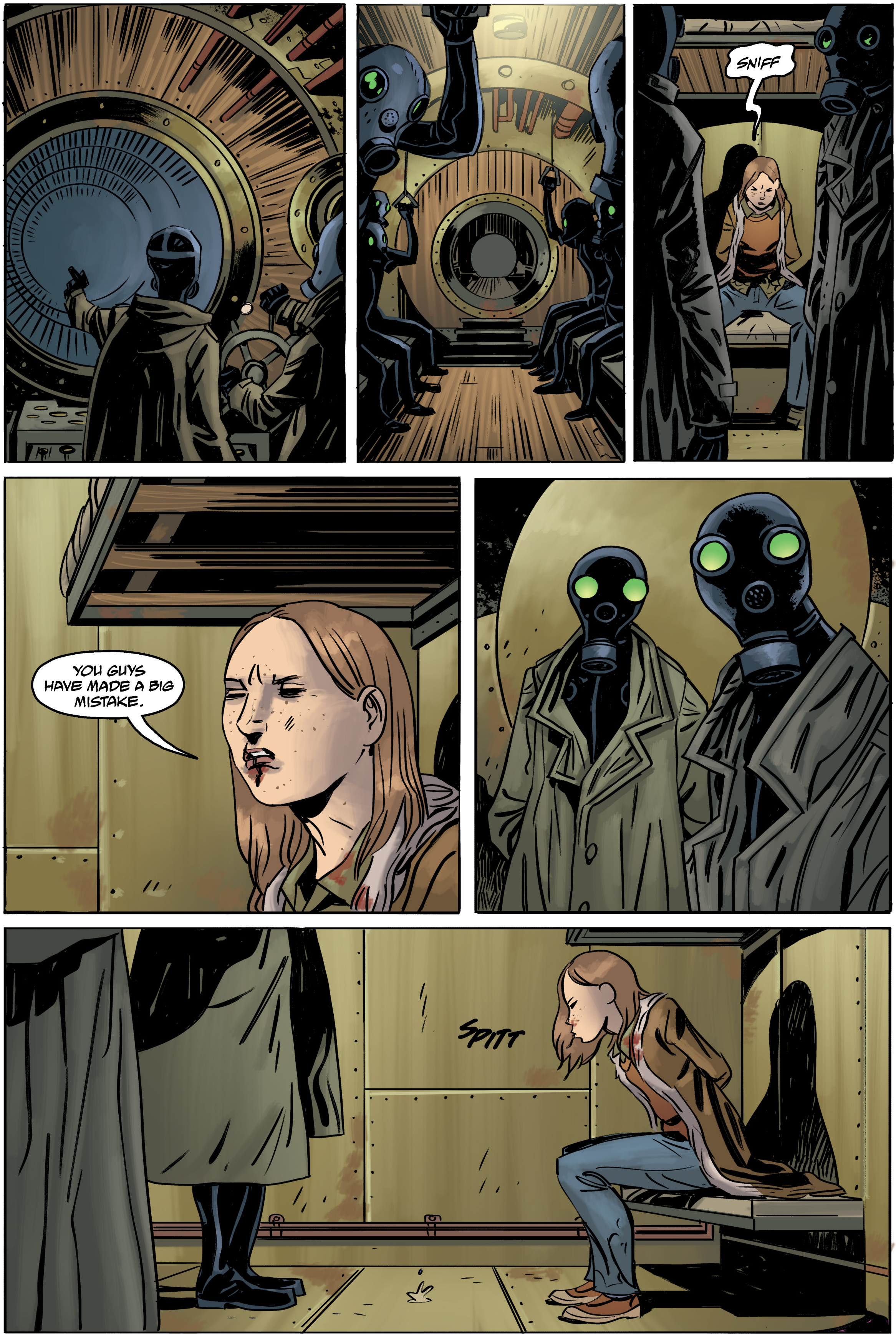
Hmm?
IMPOSSIBLE.
I'M SORRY, OLD FRIEND...

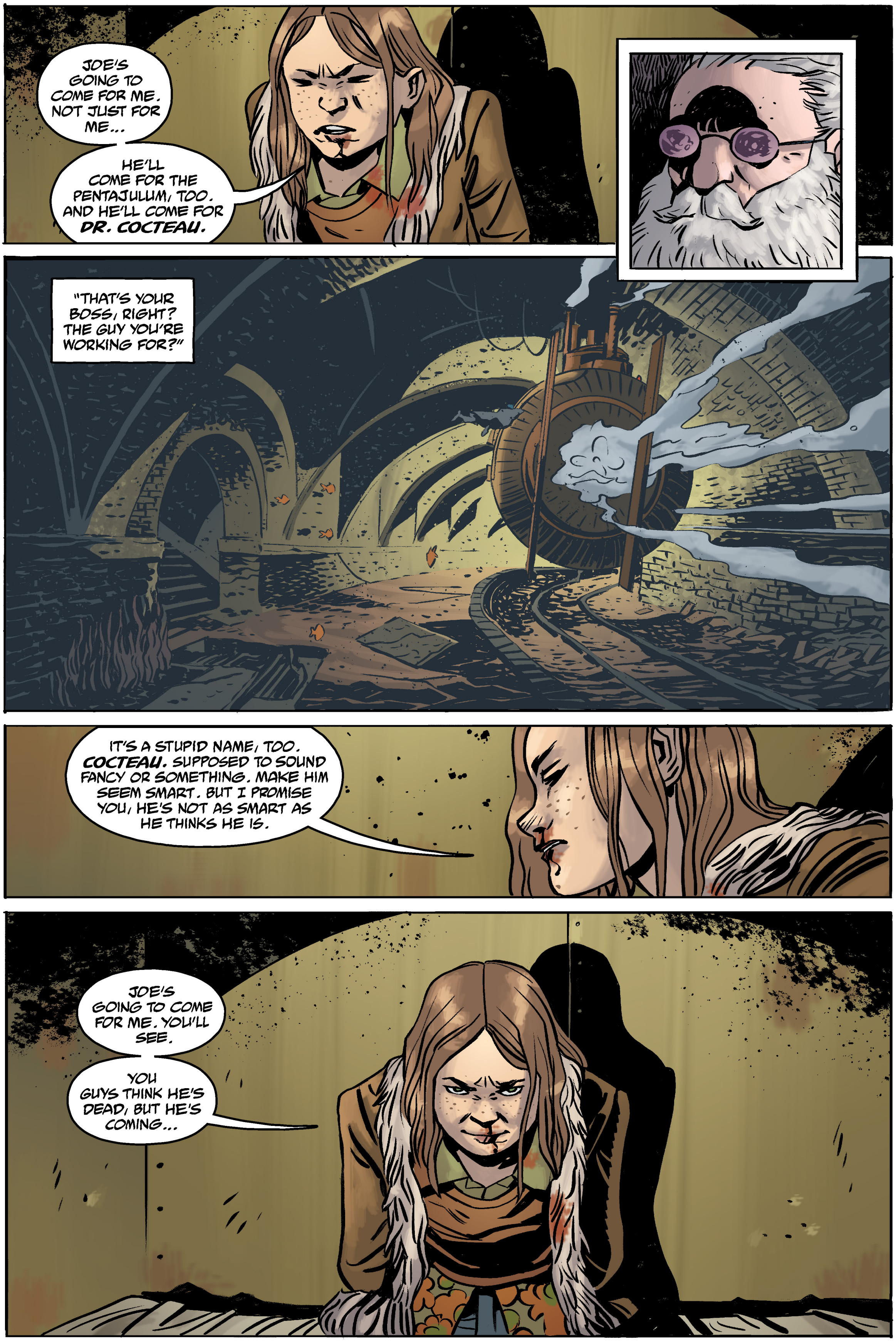
"...WHEREVER YOU ARE NOW...
"...I CANNOT HELP YOU."

IT'S A PEACEFUL DREAM OF A TIME WHEN THE WITCHES HAVE ALL BEEN KILLED OR DRIVEN FROM THE VALLEY...


THIS IS THE PROMISE OF HEAVEN.

HE LONGS FOR THAT TIME. THAT **PLACE.**
THUD

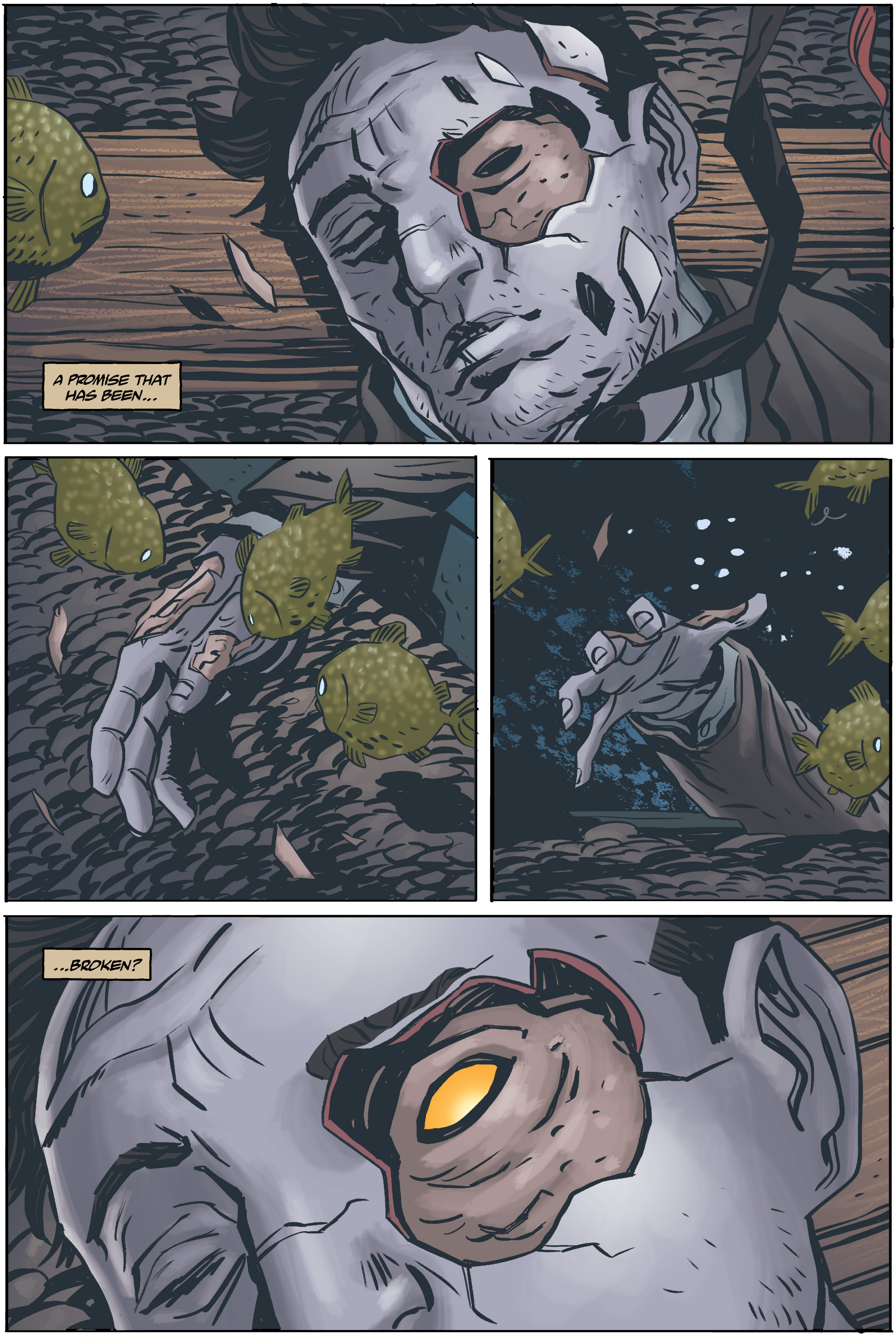

SNIFF
YOU GUYS HAVE MADE A BIG MISTAKE.
SPITT


JOE'S GOING TO COME FOR ME. NOT JUST FOR ME...
HE'LL COME FOR THE PENTAJULUM, TOO. AND HE'LL COME FOR **DR. COCTEAU.**
"THAT'S YOUR BOSS, RIGHT? THE GUY YOU'RE WORKING FOR?"
IT'S A STUPID NAME, TOO. **COCTEAU.** SUPPOSED TO SOUND FANCY OR SOMETHING. MAKE HIM SEEM SMART. BUT I PROMISE YOU, HE'S NOT AS SMART AS HE THINKS HE IS.
JOE'S GOING TO COME FOR ME. YOU'LL SEE.
YOU GUYS THINK HE'S DEAD, BUT HE'S COMING...

"HE'S A LOT HARDER TO KILL THAN YOU THINK HE IS."
HUSH.
UNNGGHHHH

IT ISN'T CROATIA.
NOR IS THIS THE GACKA RIVER.
IT'S THE MEMORY OF THE PLACE.
THE SPIRIT OF THE RIVER.

THIS IS THE PROMISE OF HEAVEN.
IMPOSSIBLE.



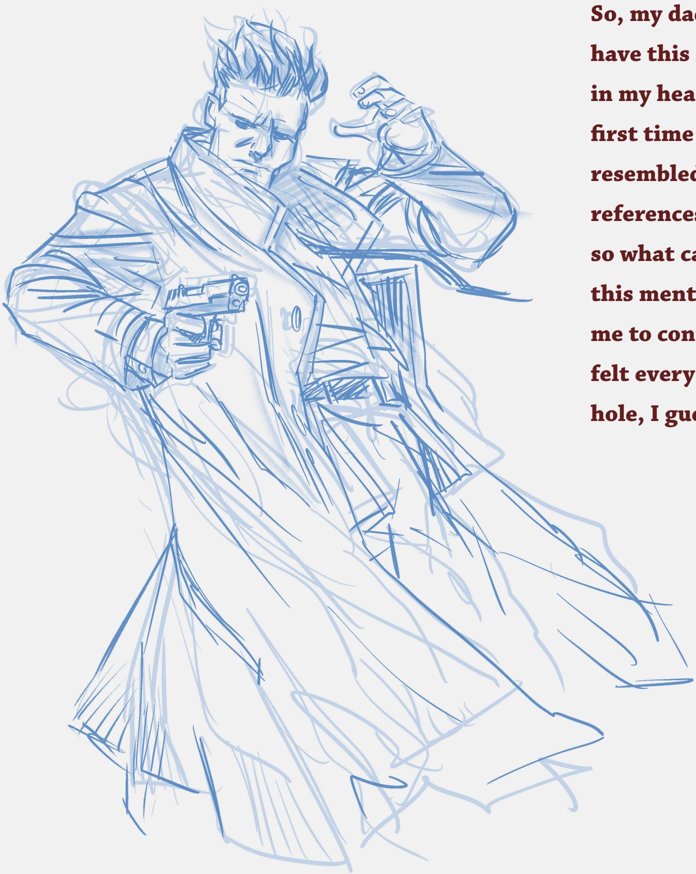
CONTINUED IN JOE GOLEM: THE OCCULT DETECTIVE – THE CONJURORS!

JOE GOLEM OCCULT DETECTIVE™

SKETCHBOOK

Notes by
Peter Bergting and Dave Palumbo

Peter Bergting: I'm a terrible sketcher, which is why I don't keep sketchbooks. Or rather, I buy them. A lot of them, preferably Moleskine ones that are super expensive. And then I ruin them by sketching something crap on the first page. As for Joe Golem, I was in awe of Patric [Reynolds]'s style from previous volumes, and those were very big shoes to fill. Mostly I wanted to get inside the Golem's head to feel what he felt. I hope some of that comes through in the art. This was a digital sketch done in Clip Studio.

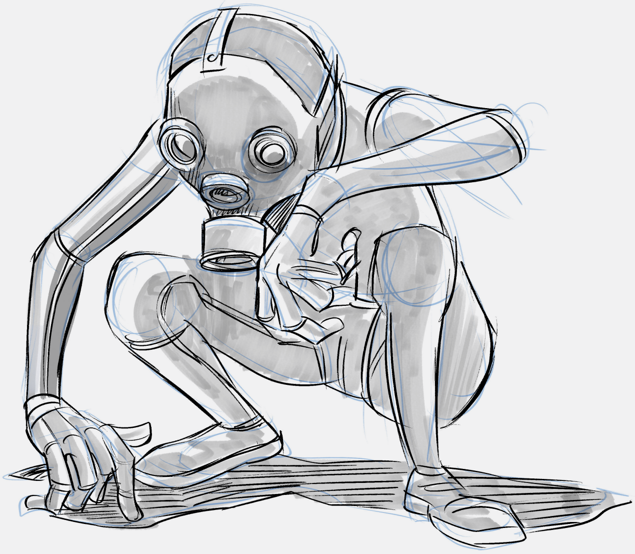


So, my dad died when I was three, and I have this sort of idealized picture of him in my head. When I saw Joe Golem for the first time I was struck by how closely he resembled Pops. I never used photo references for Joe (and rarely do anyway), so what came out when I drew him was this mental image of my father. It did help me to connect with the character as well. I felt every blow Joe took (and every bullet hole, I guess).

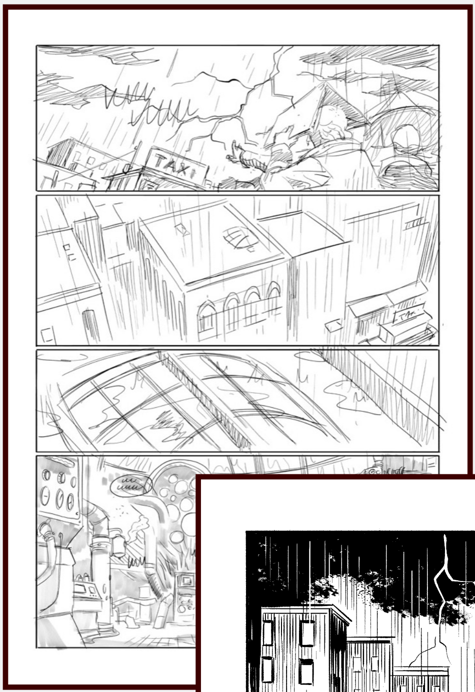
No one can draw witches like Patric, and I wasn't happy with the ones I drew in *Baltimore* so I was going back to the really scary ones Patric had done for *Joe*. I had those as reference all the way back when we worked on some of the *Baltimore* stories. One day I'll get them right.

I sketch digitally. Mostly out of laziness since I love pen and paper, but the iPad or the Wacom is always there with me and I can't stop doing small, cute versions of the characters. I'd love to do an issue in this style. And tentacles, I draw those to relax. Doesn't everyone?

The monkey was fun to design. I've always felt a special connection to chimps (maybe because of my hairy back), and I started to mimic the poses he made when I was sketching him/her.



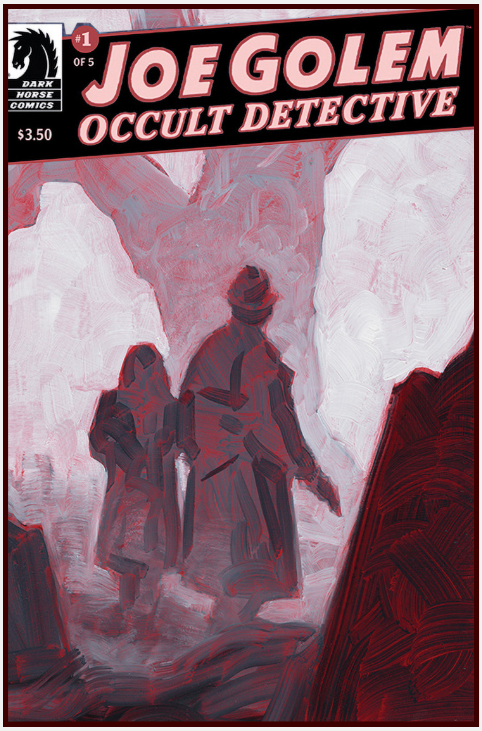
Again with the cutesy characters. Let's make a book like this happen! *Joe Golem* for preschoolers! Could be a hit.



I’m a terrible penciler and even worse with thumbnails. I’d be happier to go to inks straight away and just redraw until I’m happy (which would take a long time). For most of *Joe Golem* I had this image of Will Eisner’s New York in my head. I could never draw NY like Patric and my style is perhaps just a little closer to Eisner or Mézières.

Bottom right is actually based on machinery from an old paper factory.

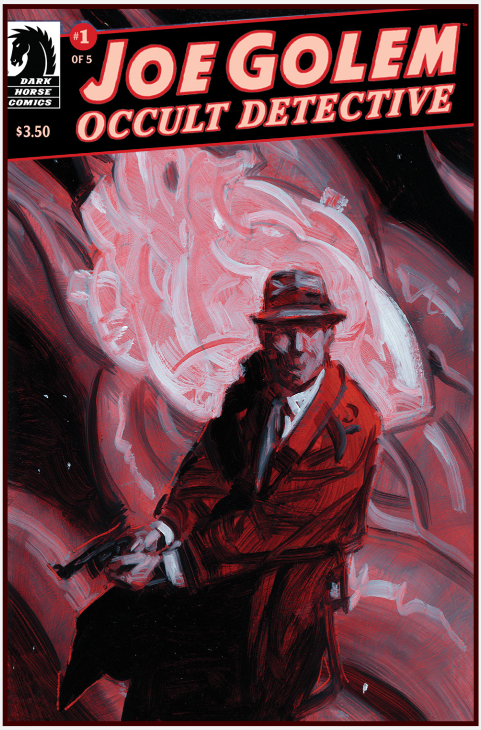
Patric had already done a great Church, so there was nothing I could do but try not to mess it up. I added my own flourishes whenever I could, mostly based on my late grandfather. It's all in the small stuff, like how the fingers are splayed, the liver spots on the back of the hand, the way he moves. I didn't know it at the time but that map was actually supposed to be 3D with tiny little model houses.



Dave Palumbo: I do all of my final sketches in oil, always with the same black/white/red color scheme. The simple monochrome lets me design primarily in values and shapes while still having just enough color to give a little extra punch where needed. I do these in paint mostly because I enjoy that medium best, but it also gives a more accurate sense of where the finished piece will be headed.

Here are a few cover concepts that could have been.

I played around a bit for the first two issues with Joe and the gas-men slugging it out (*opposite, top*), though the directions chosen were a bit more evocative than just straight forward fisticuffs. For issue #3 (*opposite, bottom*), I was really interested in featuring the evil tree, with this version keeping everything very low key and quiet. In #4 (*this page, top*), I wanted to see Joe facing unbeatable odds, surrounded and outgunned but still ready to fight, and that attitude continues into #5 (*this page, bottom*) where he's fighting to his last breath. I still really like the profile view falling along this downward diagonal. It makes me think of a side-scrolling video game as Joe is being dragged deeper and deeper.



For the hardcover, I've been following a limited color montage style for the past two volumes that continues here. The Pentajulum was a natural choice for the background element, being such a great MacGuffin. While we ended up going that way on the final cover (with hands holding it above), this was another take where it was laid out over some Outer Dark tentacles (*top*). But the other version (*bottom*) really plays up the Outer Dark concept, with Joe plunging into an abyss of swirling tentacles among the stars.

MIKE MIGNOLA's fascination with ghosts and monsters began at an early age; reading *Dracula* at age twelve introduced him to Victorian literature and folklore, from which he has never recovered. Starting in 1982 as a bad inker for Marvel Comics, he swiftly evolved into a not-so-bad artist. By the late 1980s, he had begun to develop his own unique graphic style, with mainstream projects like *Cosmic Odyssey* and *Batman: Gotham by Gaslight*. In 1994, he published the first *Hellboy* series through Dark Horse. There are over fifteen *Hellboy* graphic novels, several spinoff titles (*B.P.R.D.*, *Lobster Johnson*, *Abe Sapien*, *Sir Edward Grey: Witchfinder,* and more), prose books, animated films, and two live-action films. Along the way he worked on Francis Ford Coppola's film *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), Disney's *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001), and with director Guillermo del Toro on *Blade II* (2002), *Hellboy* (2004), and *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* (2008). A new film by Neil Marshall was released in 2019. Mike's books have earned numerous awards and are published in a great many countries. He lives somewhere in Southern California with his wife, daughter, and cat.

CHRISTOPHER GOLDEN is the New York Times bestselling, Bram Stoker Award-winning author of *Ararat*, *The Pandora Room*, *Snowblind*, and many other novels. With Mike Mignola, he co-created the Dark Horse Comics series *Baltimore* and *Joe Golem: Occult Detective*. As editor, Golden has produced numerous anthologies, including *The New Dead*, *Seize the Night*, and *Hark! The Herald Angels Scream*. He has also written screenplays, video games, radio plays, and an online animated series. A frequent lecturer and keynote speaker, Golden co-hosts the podcasts "Three Guys with Beards" and "Defenders Dialogue," and he founded the Merrimack Valley Halloween Book Festival. He lives in Massachusetts with his family and too many books. Please visit him at www.christophergolden.com

PETER BERGTING has spent all of his life drawing silly and scary things and made his comic book debut with the 2006 series *The Portent*. He loves working on his slice of the Mignolaverse and plops down in front of the drawing board with a big, cheesy grin every day.

"WEIRD PULPY FUN

ABOUNDS IN THIS DARK AND MOODY RE-INTRODUCTION TO MIGNOLA'S FAVORITE NON-HELLBOY DETECTIVE."

. . . . Adventures in Poor Taste

WHAT TRULY LURKS IN THE OUTER DARK?

A chilling new adventure unfolds as Joe Golem investigates the kidnapping of a conjuror and the strange men who took him. Aided by the victim's ward, a spunky teenage girl, the detective soon finds that otherworldly forces are at work. The only way to stop the madman behind the kidnapping and occult activities is to locate a strange object known as Lector's Pentajulum. But how can they locate it, who else is trying to track it down, and how can it save both them and the city?

DARK HORSE BOOKS